

IMD announces onset of southwest monsoon in Maharashtra
page 8

Hybrid hearings will continue, Supreme Court tells High Courts
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U.S. Senate passes innovation Bill in a bid to counter China
page 13

Sakkari dethrones Swiatek, meets Krejickova; Nadal in last four
page 15



NEARBY
Inoculation for 18-44 age group restarts in city
NEW DELHI
The Capital has received 1.25 lakh doses of Covishield and 20,000 doses of Covaxin vaccines for beneficiaries in the 18-44 age group, and the youth can now get vaccinated for free at government centres, AAP leader Atishi said on Wednesday.

CITY • PAGE 3

11 held for duping 5 lakh investors of ₹150 crore
NEW DELHI
The Cyber Cell of Delhi Police has arrested 11 men, including two chartered accountants, for allegedly cheating more than 5 lakh people of over ₹150 crore in two months on the pretext of lucrative returns via apps. A total of ₹11 crore of the cheated money has been blocked in various bank accounts.

CITY • PAGE 3

Ration out of stock, non-cardholders return
NEW DELHI
Several government centres distributing ration to non-cardholders kept their gates shut due to unavailability of foodgrains. People waiting outside some government schools said it had been four days since they were returning home empty-handed as the stocks had run out.

CITY • PAGE 2

Centre announces hike in MSP for paddy, pulses, oilseeds

Farmer groups unhappy with the increase in paddy price

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central government has hiked the minimum support price (MSP) for common paddy to ₹1,940 a quintal for the coming kharif season, less than 4% higher than last year's price of ₹1,868.

The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on Wednesday.

In a bid to encourage crop diversification, there were slightly higher increases in the MSP for pulses, oilseeds and coarse cereals. Both tur and urad dal saw the MSP rise by ₹300, a 5% increase to ₹6,300 a quintal, while the highest absolute increase was for sesamum, whose MSP rose 6.6% to ₹7,307. Groundnut and nigerseed saw an increase of ₹275 and ₹235 respectively. However, maize saw a minimal hike of just ₹20 to ₹1,870 a quintal.

The MSP is the rate at which the government purchases crops from farmers, and is based on a calculation of at least one-and-a-half times the cost of production incurred by the farmers. This year, the MSP for bajra was set at 85% above the cost of production, while the MSP for urad and tur will ensure 60% returns. The MSPs for the remaining crops were mostly set around the stipu-

Better returns

The Minimum Support Prices for most Kharif crops have been increased for the 2021-22 season so that the returns over cost of production is at least 50%. The price list of select crops:

Crop	MSP 2021-22 (₹/ quintal)	Absolute increase in MSP (₹/ quintal)	Returns over cost (%)
Paddy (Common)	1,940	72	50
Bajra	2,250	100	85
Ragi	3,377	82	50
Maize	1,870	20	50
Tur (Arhar)	6,300	300	62
Moong	7,275	79	50
Urad	6,300	300	65
Groundnut	5,550	275	50
Sunflower seed	6,015	130	50

lated 50% above the cost of production.

The announcement comes at a time when farm unions have been protesting for more than six months on Delhi's outskirts, demanding legislation to guarantee MSP for all farmers for all crops, and a repeal of three contentious farm reform laws.

Terming the announcement a *jumla* (false promise) as it did not account for the full cost of production, farmers' groups under the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) noted that some increases, especially for maize, did not even keep pace with infla-

tion. "There is no mechanism that guarantees that every farmer can get at least the MSP as the floor price in the market. Therefore, this is a meaningless concept as far as farmers are concerned, and that is why this movement has been asking for a statutory entitlement for all farmers so that a remunerative MSP can be ensured for all farmers," said the SKM.

Briefing the press after the meeting, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar reiterated that the MSPs were here to stay.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Mamata to seek support of other CMs

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday met leaders of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, including Rakesh Tikait, at the State Secretariat in Kolkata and extended support to the farmers protesting against the three agriculture Bills passed by the Centre. She said she would write to Chief Ministers of the Opposition-ruled States, seeking their support for the farmers. • PAGE 9

Hold fresh talks, Akali Dal urges Centre

Former Punjab Deputy Chief Minister and Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday asked Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar to hold fresh talks with the protesting farmers to understand why they were seeking repeal of the three laws. He urged the NDA government to be sensitive to the pain and anguish of the farmers. • PAGE 9

Shun vaccine nationalism, says UNGA president-elect

It will destroy efforts to eradicate pandemic: Abdulla Shahid

SUHASINI HAIDAR
MEERA SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI/COIMBATORE

Vaccine nationalism would destroy countries' efforts to eradicate the pandemic and must be avoided "at all costs", United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) president-elect and Maldivian Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid said on Tuesday.

Terming the disparity in vaccination coverage in developed countries and the rest of the world "unacceptable", he said, "No one is



Abdulla Shahid

safe until everyone is safe." He was speaking to *The Hindu* from New York, a day after his historic election as PGA (President of the Gener-

al Assembly), with a decisive majority of 143 of 191 votes cast by member-countries.

Human rights would be a "central theme" at the UNGA, Mr. Shahid said, while he, as President, would refrain from "taking sides on contentious issues" such as Jammu and Kashmir and remain "impartial". "India was one of the first countries who came out supporting me," he said, thanking the Indian leadership.

INTERVIEW • PAGE 9

Former Minister Jitin Prasada leaves Congress, joins BJP

'Couldn't serve people's interests in Congress'

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister Jitin Prasada joined the BJP on Wednesday, leaving the Congress, where "he felt he was unable to serve the interests of his people and society".

His induction took place at the BJP's national headquarters here in the presence of Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and BJP media



Jitin Prasada

cell-in-charge Anil Baluni.

Mr. Prasada said he joined the BJP as he felt it was currently the only party that was an "institutionally national party" and all others were either personality-

oriented or regional in nature. "I have been associated with the Congress for three generations and thought long and hard before leaving. I left because I felt that if one is unable to serve one's people or protect their interests being in a certain party, it's better to leave. Under the BJP and under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I feel that I will be better able to serve my people," he said at a press meet.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8
CONG. REACTION • PAGE 9

Relatives of patients who died in Agra hospital seek probe

'Owner talked of mock drill in video'

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

The relatives of patients who died at a hospital in Agra have demanded a high-level probe and the arrest of the owner after a video surfaced in which he is allegedly heard talking of conducting a "mock-drill" to check which patient would survive if oxygen support was cut off.

Among the victims was police head constable Ashok Kumar Singh's wife who died on April 26 at Shri Paras Hospital. She was admitted on April 25. Mr. Singh demanded a high-level probe. "This was a deliberate act. The doctor of the hospital should be arrested. We want justice," he said.

Mr. Singh said he received a call from the hospital around 5 a.m. on April 26. "The doctor said there was scarcity of oxygen, and asked to shift the patient elsewhere. But when I reached the hospital, they said they could manage for an hour or so. They also asked me to arrange our own cylinders," Mr. Singh said. He said he was not allowed to see his wife on the day of her death.

The matter came to light on Tuesday after the owner of Shri Paras Hospital, Arinjay Jain, was heard in a video allegedly claiming how the hospital shut off oxygen supply for five minutes on April 27 as part of a "mock drill" to see which patients would survive and which would not.

Hospital sealed

Twenty-two patients started turning blue while 74 others survived, he is heard saying in the video. Following a preliminary probe, Agra District Magistrate N. Prabhakar ordered an FIR against Mr. Jain under the epidemics Act, while the hospital was sealed and the doctor's licence sus-



Police personnel deployed outside Shri Paras Hospital in Agra on Tuesday. • PTI

pendent.

Mr. Prabhakar, however, said there were no deaths due to lack of oxygen in the hospital on the said days, April 26 and 27. On April 26 and 27, seven patients had died at the hospital, the administration said.

Vishal Sharma, a journalist with a Hindi daily, lost his mother to COVID-19 at the hospital.

While there was an oxygen crisis at the hospital and in the district on April 26 and 27, he says he never doubted the integrity of the doctors. However, Mr. Jain's admission has ignited doubt in his mind and he thinks there had been some "misdoing". "The doctor is saying it all himself," he said.

Mr. Sharma claimed that on the day of his mother's death, they were not allowed to view the patients through the CCTV, as was the usual practice since they were not permitted inside the COVID-19 ward.

Mr. Sharma said the FIR lodged against the hospital was "an eyewash". "They should take such action that these things don't repeat."

The kin of patients also claimed that the number of people who died on the two days was much higher than the official figure of seven.

Central deputation of officers very low, DoPT tells States

'Not sending officers may affect future cadre review proposals'

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

With the States not nominating enough officers for Central deputation, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has shot off a letter to the State governments, cautioning them that not sending enough officers may affect future cadre review proposals.

For instance, Uttar Pradesh has over 500 Indian Administrative Service offi-

cers but data show that only 32 IAS officers are presently on Central deputation.

West Bengal has around 280 IAS officers but only 11 are posted with the Central Ministries.

Bihar fares better with 32 IAS officers on Central deputation out of 208, whereas 28 out of the 167 IAS officers of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre are serving the Centre.

Out of the 241 Gujarat cadre officers, 27 are posted

with the Union government. Rajasthan has deputed 13 out of its 247 IAS officers to the Centre.

An official of Uttar Pradesh cadre, however, said it was not that officers were not willing to go on Central deputation but the no-objection clearance was hard to come by.

The final clearance is given by the Chief Minister.

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 8

Punjab gangsters killed in Kolkata encounter

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Two alleged gangsters from Punjab were killed in an encounter with the Special Task Force of the West Bengal police in the New Town area of Kolkata on Wednesday afternoon.

Officials of the STF said a policemen suffered bullet injuries in the operation and was hospitalised.

"Jaypal (Bhullar) and Jaspreet (Singh) had killed two ASIs [Assistant Sub-Inspectors] in Ludhiana, Punjab, on May 15. There was a cash

reward on them," Additional Director General of Police, STF, Vineet Kumar Goyal told presspersons.

The police said the two gangsters had been hiding in the city for the past few days.

DETAILS ON • PAGE 8

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Court rejects Sushil's plea for special food

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday rejected the plea of two-time Olympic medalist wrestler Sushil Kumar, arrested in connection with the murder of 23-year-old wrestler Sagar Dhankhar at Chhatrasal Stadium here, seeking special food and supplements while in custody.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Satvir Singh Lamba said, "All the basic needs and necessities of the accused/applicant [Mr. Sushil] are being taken care of as per the provisions of Delhi Prisons Rule, 2018."

"The alleged special foods and supplements appears to be only the desires and wishes of the accused/applicant and are not in any manner the essential need or necessity for the accused/applicant," the judge said while rejecting the plea.

The Jail Superintendent strongly opposed the application. It said the desire of Mr. Sushil for special foods, supplements or extra protein "tantamount to discrimination among the prisoners." It is further contended that allowing such kind of application may invite flood of applications from many more prisoners, who can afford such type of diets at their own expenses," the jail authorities said.

Non-cardholders return with empty hands as ration runs out

Despite several trips to distribution centres, many were unable to get foodgrains

SHINJINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI

The plight of city's poor continued as several government centres distributing ration to non-cardholders kept their gates shut due to unavailability of ration.

People who had queued up outside some of the government schools said it had already been four days that they were returning home unsuccessfully as foodgrains had run out of stock at the centres.

Many said they were subjected to COVID-19 tests and given tokens and asked to return the next day, only to find the ration distribution centres closed.

Desperate attempts

Babli, a resident of Dakhshinpur, who has been visiting a government school in Hauz Rani for the last four days said: "After hours of standing in a queue, I managed to enter the school on the second day but was told that I will not get the ration if I don't undergo a COVID-19 test. So I got tested after which I was given a token and asked to come the following day by which time the stock had run out."

"I am the sole earner in the family and have been out of work for all these months. Will the governments never



People ignoring social distancing norms while waiting to collect free ration at a government school in north-east Delhi's Vishwas Nagar. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

think about the poor? They win elections because of us and once elected, they forget about the poor," said Babli.

Zulekha Khatun, a resident of Jagdamba Camp in south Delhi, said: "First they said that we have to get tests done, which we did. But even after that all we have right now is a piece of paper which is supposed to act as a token. We did whatever they asked us to do but now what? How am I supposed to keep my children? My youngest child is five years old now."

"I have been borrowing grains from others and feeding the family currently. But

how long can this arrangement continue? I can't even return to my village in Samastipur as we do not have enough money to buy tickets. There is not even enough to take an auto to the distribution centre. I walk for half an hour each side in this heat," said Khatun.

Multiple trips

With not enough money for basic sustenance, for many, making multiple trips to the distribution centres each day was equally challenging.

Fifty eight-year-old Abrana Khatun said: "If the government does not want to give us ration they can clear-

ly state that. We are spending money each day and visiting the centre just to return empty handed. Last year during the lockdown, I at least got ration for a month but this time there has been nothing."

Priyanka Devi, a domestic helper who has been out of work since the lockdown began said: "We are desperate at this point. I have been coming to the centre since Sunday. Most days we spend hours in the heat with empty-stomach as we feel that reaching early might improve our chances. But looks like there are no foodgrains available at this point."

Green economy and mobility key aspects of draft 2041 master plan

It also focuses on affordable housing, in-situ rehabilitation

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A dedicated Green Development Area (GDA) for incentivising large-scale implementation of green economies, transit-oriented development aligned with mass transit, multi-modal integration and facilitation of first and last mile connectivity are some of the key aspects of the draft Master Plan for Delhi (MPD) 2041, which was placed in the public domain while inviting suggestions and objections from stakeholders.

Addressing pollution and climate change by promoting clean economic activities and minimised vehicular pollution by creating multi-modal hubs and encouraging green mobility are some of the aspects the MPD-2041 concentrates on. The draft states that polluting industries will not be permitted to operate within Delhi and the list of such industries will be periodically updated by the Delhi government and DDA.

The draft also highlights the enhancement of a "Green-Blue Infrastructure" by taking into account the Aravali ridge, the Yamuna, forests, wetlands, parks and other assets.

"The GDA policy has been proposed for green belt villages and it permits restricted development and pre-



An area-based improvement approach will be adopted for revitalising commercial and socio-cultural hubs. ■ FILE PHOTO

substantial proportion of land to be maintained as wooded area and green cover," according to the draft MPD - 2041.

Affordable housing and in-situ rehabilitation of those living in slums and JJ clusters were other key aspects outlined by the MPD-2041 and the draft document said that in unauthorised colonies "settlement level improvements" are required to make all parts of the settlement accessible for emergency vehicles like ambulances and fire tenders.

Forms of workspaces

Apart from creation of strategic hubs of high investment, the draft MPD-2041 also lays out a plan for facilitating new forms of workspaces. "A finer network of decentralised workspaces in the form of small warehousing for e-commerce, co-working spaces

for start-up economy shall be facilitated. The plan provides adequate space norms and facilities for supporting informal economies," the document read.

According to the draft MPD-2041, an area-based improvement approach will be adopted for revitalising the commercial and socio-cultural hubs of the city, including areas like Connaught Place, Mandi House, Pragati Maidan and Shahjahanabad (Walled City).

Improved connectivity and transport infrastructure, shift from private to shared mobility and making the Capital "walkable and cycleable" are other key aspects mentioned in the MPD-2041. "A Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) shall be prepared for Delhi to achieve systematic integration across all levels and modes of urban transport," the draft MPD-2041 stated.

**Jammu and Kashmir
Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE (QC&PD)
Division, HMT, Srinagar
Phone: - 0194-2496307, E-Mail: - xenmandp@gmail.com**

Corrigendum-01

Subject: Supply of Water Testing Chemicals, CRM and Equipment's for various Water Testing Laboratories of Kashmir PHE Jal Shakti Department
Ref: 1) This office e-NIT No. -PHE/QC&PD/04e-Tender Dated: 24-05-2021.
2) This office letter No. -PHE/QC&PD/635-37 Dated: -02-06-2021.
3) Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Division Chadoora/Nodal Officer JMM/NABL/WQ Letter No. -PHE/CE/JJM/188-90 Dated:-04-06-2021
4) Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Division Chadoora/Nodal Officer JMM/NABL Srinagar office letter No. -PHE/CE/JJM/191-194 Dated: -05-06-2021.

S.No	Please Read	Qty	Instead Of	Qty to be treated as
1	Ammonium Molybdate	500gmx50No	Ammonium Molybdate tetra hydrate	500gmx50No
2	Mercuric Iodide AR	500gmx 50No	Mercuric Iodide red AR	500gmx50No
3	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate (Certified Reference Material)	80gm/Nox10 Nos	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate (Certified Reference Material)	80gmx51 Nos
4	Sodium chloride (Certified Reference Material)	80gm/No x10 Nos	Sodium chloride (Certified Reference Material)	80gm x51Nos
5	Sodium Carbonate (Certified Reference Material)	80gm/Nox10 Nos	Sodium Carbonate (Certified Reference Material)	80gmx41 Nos
6	Potassium Dichromate (Certified Reference Material)	80gm/Nox10 Nos	Potassium Dichromate (Certified Reference Material)	80gmx51 Nos
7	Calcium Carbonate (Certified Reference Material)	50gm/Nox10 Nos	Calcium Carbonate (Certified Reference Material)	50gmx51 Nos
8	Di-Sodium Oxalate (Certified Reference Material)	60gm/Nox10 Nos	Di-Sodium Oxalate (Certified Reference Material)	60gmx51Nos
9	Buffer Solution (Citric Acid/Sodium Hydroxide/Hydrogen Chloride) (Certified Reference Material)	500ml/Nox10 Nos	Buffer Solution (Citric Acid/Sodium Hydroxide/Hydrogen Chloride) (Certified Reference Material)	500mlx51 Nos
10	Buffer Solution (Di Sodium hydrogen phosphate/potassium di hydrogen phosphate) (Certified Reference Material)	500ml/Nox10 Nos	Buffer Solution (Di Sodium hydrogen phosphate/potassium di hydrogen phosphate) (Certified Reference Material)	500mlx51 Nos
11	Buffer Solution (Boric Acid/Potassium Chloride/Sodium hydroxide) (Certified Reference Material)	500ml/Nox10 Nos	Buffer Solution (Boric Acid/Potassium Chloride/Sodium hydroxide) (Certified Reference Material)	500mlx51 Nos
12	Conductivity Standard Solution 0.143 us/cm	500ml/Nox10 Nos	Conductivity Standard Solution/Potassium chloride solution (nominal) 4.1mS/cm (Certified Reference Material) for the measurement of electrolytic conductivity	500mlx51 Nos
13	Turbidity 100 ntu calibration standard (Certified Reference Material)	100ml/Nox10 Nos	Turbidity 100 ntu calibration standard (Certified Reference Material)	100mlx51 Nos
14	Iron Standard Solution traceable to SRM from NIST (Certified Reference Material)	100ml/Nox10 Nos	Iron Standard Solution traceable to SRM from NIST (Certified Reference Material)	100mlx51 Nos
15	Silicon Standard Solution traceable to SRM from NIST (Certified Reference Material)	100ml/Nox10 Nos	Silicon Standard Solution traceable to SRM from NIST (Certified Reference Material)	100mlx51 Nos
16	Hypochlorous Acid (Certified Reference Material)	750ml/Nox10 Nos	Hypochlorous Acid (Certified Reference Material)	750mlx51 Nos
17	Manganese Sulphate (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/Nox10 Nos	Manganese Sulphate (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/x51 Nos
18	(Phenate Reagent) by 1: Sodium Hydroxide 2: Phenol (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/No and 500ml/No x10 Nos	(Phenate Reagent) by 1: Sodium Hydroxide 2: AR	500gm x51 Nos
19	Anhydrous Ammonium Chloride (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/Nox10 Nos	Ammonium Chloride complying to ACS, Iso, European Pharmacopoeia or Certified Reference Material	500gm/Nox51 Nos
20	Anhydrous Sodium Chloride (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/Nox10 Nos	Sodium Chloride complying to ACS, Iso, European Pharmacopoeia or Certified Reference Material	500gm/Nox51 Nos
21	Potassium Chloride (Certified Reference Material)	500gm/Nox10 Nos	Potassium Chloride assay ≥ 99.5% with Br/Ip/04/SO4/N/Ph/Ba/Ca/Fe/Mg/Na% range specified or Certified Reference Material	500gm/Nox51 Nos
22	Phenolphthalein Indicators (Certified Reference Material)	100gm/Nox10 Nos	Phenolphthalein indicator complying to ACS, Iso, European Pharmacopoeia or Certified Reference Material	100gm/Nox51 Nos
23	Ammonium Buffer Solution (Certified Reference Material)	5litres/Nox10 Nos	Ammonium Buffer Solution	5litres/Nox51 Nos
24	Fluoride Ion Analyzer (including reagents) Specifications: (i) Range: 0.1 to 10.0 mg/litre. (ii) Lower Limit detection: 0.10 mg /litre. (iii) Power Supply: 100-115/230 V-AC.	10 Nos.	Fluoride Ion Analyzerincluding reagents for 250 tests. Specifications: (i) Range: 0.08 to 2.00 mg/litre. (ii) Lower Limit Detection: 0.08 mg /litre. (iii) Power Supply: 4 Batteries (AA)	10 Nos.

The estimated cost for the said e-NIT is to be treated as **Rs.83.00 lacs** instead of **41.93 Lacs**. Furthermore, the critical dates for said e-NIT is rescheduled here as under: -

S.No	Particular	Date	Time
1	Clarification end date	12-06-2021	02.00PM
2	Bid Submission end date	4-06-2021	02.00PM
3	Bid Opening date	5-06-2021	02.00PM

Rest all other terms and conditions are same as laid down in the said e-NIT.
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
QC&PD Jal Shakti
HMT Srinagar
DIPK-2615/21

Police oppose Gulfisha Fatima's plea claiming 'illegal' detention

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Wednesday opposed a plea by student activist Gulfisha Fatima, who claimed that her detention in judicial custody was illegal and invalid. She is an accused in a case related to the north-east Delhi riots last year.

"A bare perusal of the averments made in the petition would reveal the present petitioner [Ms. Fatima] has styled a bail petition into habeas corpus petition," the Delhi police said in an affidavit before the High Court.

The court was hearing a plea by Ms. Fatima seeking a direction to release her in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act case relating to alleged larger conspiracy that led to the north-east Delhi riots.

The police said: "The present petition has been so drafted as to show the detention of the petitioner is illegal in the eyes of the law. However, a bare perusal of the prayer sought would reveal that the intent behind the present petition is to circumvent the well settled principles of law and secure bail of the petitioner."

A Vacation Bench of Justice Rekha Palli and Justice Amit Bansal asked Ms. Fatima's counsel to file rejoinder to the police's response and listed the case for hearing on June 18.

Seeing is believing



Heat and dust: A mirage appears on Raisina Hill in the Capital on a hot Wednesday afternoon. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Head constable murder: court dismisses bail plea of accused

Judge cites possibility of intimidating witnesses

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday dismissed the bail plea of a man arrested in connection with the death of head constable Rattan Lal during the north-east Delhi riots last year.

Additional Sessions Judge Vinod Yadav noted that the nature of allegations against accused Irshad Ali are "very serious". The judge remarked that the public witnesses in the case are residents of the same locality as Ali and the possibility of him threatening or intimidating them, if released on bail at this stage cannot be ruled out.

Prima facie opinion

The court also said it was "prima facie evident that at or around the commission of crime, i.e the murder of Rattan Lal, there was nobody present at the roof of Mohan Nursing Home". "The footage of NDTV does not appear to be contemporaneous to the commission of crime in this case. It is, however, a prima facie opinion which shall be ascertained during the course of trial," it said.

Ali's counsel had relied on a viral video of news channel NDTV to argue that persons from the riotous mob, who were found stationed on the rooftop of Mohan Nursing

Home, were firing upon the police personnel and persons of other community. "Mohan Nursing Home being not far away from the scene of crime (SOC), it is quite possible that deceased HC Rattan Lal might have suffered bullet injury from any such rifle and consequently died," Ali's counsel had argued.

However, the Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) played two video clips in the court. In the first clip, which is part of a news bulletin of NDTV, narrated by Mr. Ravish Kumar, showed a number of persons at the roof of Mohan Nursing Home firing through rifle. The second video, which is claimed to be contemporaneous to the attack upon the police party by the rioters, clearly showed that at that time there was nobody at the roof of Mohan Nursing Home.

The SPP argued that the footage of NDTV did not show the correct picture as far as the time of commission of crime in this case is concerned; whereas, the other footage which is part of the record of this case, clearly establishes that nobody was there on the roof of Mohan Nursing Home at the time of incident.

The court while dismissing Ali's bail plea said the bail applications of several co-accused has already been dismissed.

60% of mothers return to work within six months of delivery, reveals study

'Govt. creches unequipped to admit children under 1 year'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A study on breastfeeding knowledge and practices of working mothers in the informal economy in New Delhi has shown that six months of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) was difficult as 38% of mothers returned to work under three months of delivery and 60% within six months of delivery, leading to early weaning.

The study conducted by researchers from the Indian Institute for Human Settlements interviewed 150 mothers, including domestic workers, vendors, home-based and "barter" working mothers, out of which 79% were breastfeeding.

Four sites covered

Of the 21 women, who had a child under six months, 14 reported exclusive breastfeeding. The study was conducted in four sites in Delhi where the predominant employment is in the informal economy.

The study found that while deciding to take one's child to work, there was an



The study interviewed 150 mothers who are predominantly employed in the informal economy. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

overall hesitation to carry a child under 12 months to work, fearing infection, need for mother's attention, and disruption at work.

Work and duty

"Only 37% of the sampled population reported taking their child to work regularly or often, of which 59% were working from their home," the study said. It also found that local creches, run by the government, were not equipped to admit children under 12 months, and mostly pre-

At 31.4°C, city records highest minimum temperature

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded the highest minimum temperature of the year on Wednesday at 31.4 degrees Celsius, which is four degrees below normal and a maximum temperature of 42.2 degrees Celsius, which is three degrees above normal. The maximum temperature was equal to the highest recorded this season on April 28.

The meteorological department has forecast mainly clear sky with strong surface winds on June 10. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to hover around 41-31 degrees Celsius respectively. However, relief from the heat is expected over the weekend with light rain and strong winds being forecast. The city has not recorded any heat wave so far this summer.

ferred children over two years.

The pathways for intervention suggested by the study include delayed return to work, increased spatial and temporal proximity of a mother with her child, effective knowledge and deeper understanding of the reasoning and implications behind the six-month exclusive breastfeeding recommendation and enabling the physical environment at home and workplace to the needs of a mother for managing child care.

Timings
DELHI

THURSDAY, JUN. 10		
RISE	05:23	SET 19:19
RISE	05:06	SET 19:23
FRIDAY, JUN. 11		
RISE	05:23	SET 19:20
RISE	05:50	SET 20:16
SATURDAY, JUN. 12		
RISE	05:23	SET 19:20
RISE	06:39	SET 21:08

Delhi Weather max min

Delhi City	42	31
Safdarjung	42	31
Palam	42	31

Delhi Palam Today
41°C Uneasy hot and dry weather with moderate winds and dust haze likely. Drop in day temperature. Evening would remain warm.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
41°C Light warm winds likely to prevail during day with few clouds. Day remain hot.

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IN BRIEF

Delhi Police trace missing rapper in M.P.

NEW DELHI
A 23-year-old city-based rapper who had gone missing a week ago, after posting a note on social media suggesting that he was going to end his life, was traced by a Delhi Police team on Wednesday. The police said they received information that the rapper, Aditya Tiwari, was at his friend's house in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh.

HC to hear arrested RJD MP's plea

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday said it will hear a plea by RJD Rajya Sabha MP Amarendra Dhari Singh, arrested in a money laundering case related to an alleged fertilizer scam, challenging trial court's order granting his 10-day custody to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on June 11.

The High Court noted that since Mr. Singh's counsel circulated certain judgments to challenge the trial court order, the ED's counsel also wished to place some judgments in support of his arguments.

Money laundering case
Mr. Singh was arrested by Enforcement Directorate on June 2 under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

His plea said the special judge's order suffers from complete non-application of mind and has been passed mechanically without proper appreciation of peculiar facts of the case and material on record.

The case pertains to an alleged fertilizer scam linked to the IFFCO and India Potash Limited (IPL), in which the CBI had registered a corruption case last month.

Inoculation drive for 18-44 age group restarts at govt. centres

Booking resumes as city receives fresh stock of vaccines

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Capital has received 1.25 lakh doses of Covishield and 20,000 doses of Covaxin vaccines for 18-44 age group, and the youth can now get vaccinated for free at government centres, AAP leader Atishi said on Wednesday.

"Many people between 18-44 years had been administered the first dose but were unable to get the second dose. Now, Covaxin is available and people can get the second dose," the AAP leader said.

Ms. Atishi said that private hospitals were administering the vaccines at "exorbitant costs" and now vaccines are available at government centres free of cost.

The Delhi government spokesperson said that after the arrival of the Covishield vaccine doses, booking for the first dose of 18-44 age group will restart from Wednesday. "From today [Wednesday], booking for the first dose of Covishield for 18-44



A beneficiary gets a vaccine shot in Delhi on Wednesday. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

will restart on the CoWIN platform," the spokesperson said.

There was no stock of Covishield for 18-44 years in government facilities for the past many days and Covaxin was being given only for second dose. So, there was no free first dose for the age group.

Ms. Atishi said that the total tally of vaccines administered in Delhi has reached over 57 lakh, and 13 lakh people have been administered both the doses.

She also said that the government has received Covaxin for people of 45 years of age and above.

"On Tuesday, we had said that the stock of Covaxin is over in Delhi and it was unavailable for the 45+ age group people at many centres. Yesterday, late in the evening, Delhi received 30,000 doses of Covaxin and they are being distributed to different centres. So, from Thursday, doses of Covaxin will be available for those above the age of 45 years," Ms. Atishi said.

Over 300 new cases
The Capital reported 337 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the total cases to 14,30,128, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday.

Also, 36 deaths were reported and the total number of deaths stood at 24,704. A total of 73,241 tests were done in a day, the bulletin said. Of the total cases, 14,00,913 people have recovered and there are 4,511 active cases. The test positivity rate was 0.46%.

Replicate electoral machinery for vaccination: CM

Residents happy with Delhi govt. initiative, he says

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said the entire population of India could be vaccinated within two to three months if the country's electoral structure was utilised to reach out to residents for the purpose, just like the Delhi government was doing through the 'Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination' programme.

The Chief Minister made the observation during his visit to a vaccination centre at Rajkiya Sarvodaya Vidya-

laya on Lancer Road which is part of the Delhi government initiative which, he said, had received a "thunderous response".

"We were observing that not many people were turning up to the vaccination centres across Delhi. We thought that we had to invite people from their homes and spread awareness. So, this is a new initiative that you get vaccinated where you vote. In every Vidhan Sabha, the electoral machinery is very elaborate," he said.

Booth-level officers
"Just the way, booth-level officers go to houses to give election chits before the



Arvind Kejriwal during the 'Jahan Vote, Wahan Vaccination' drive in Delhi. *SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

polls and inform people about the date and other details of the election, BLOs are going to the house of each and every person and giving slots for vaccination,"

'Beaten up and forced to chant Jai Shri Ram in jail'

Alleged ISIS member files plea in court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

An alleged ISIS member, arrested for planning suicide attacks and serial blasts across the country, approached a Delhi court on Wednesday claiming that he was beaten up by other inmates in Tihar jail and forced to chant 'Jai Shri Ram'.

The accused, Rashid Zafar, was arrested in 2018 on the allegations of being member of an ISIS-inspired group who were planning suicide attacks and serial blasts, targeting politicians as also government installations in Delhi and other parts of north India.

Advocate M.S. Khan claimed in the application, which is likely to come up for hearing on Thursday, that the incident was disclosed by the accused to his father telephonically from Tihar jail.

"The accused was beaten up and forced to chant religious slogans like 'Jai Shri Ram' by his inmates," the application said.

The plea, moved by advocate Qausar Khan, requested that "appropriate directions may be passed to the jail superintendent to look into the matter".

Raids conducted

The accused were arrested along with nine others in December 2018 after the NIA carried out searches, in coordination with Special cell of Delhi Police and Anti-Terrorism Squad of Uttar Pradesh Police, at six places in Jafrabad, Seelampur in Delhi, and 11 places in Uttar Pradesh – six in Amroha, two in Lucknow, two in Hapur and two in Meerut.

The searches and the arrests came a month before the Republic Day celebrations on January 26.

AAP accuses BJP leaders of corruption

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday alleged that South Delhi Municipal Corporation's BJP councillors and Mayor are involved in corruption.

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that the BJP-led municipal corporation is appointing members who have been involved in corruption as Mayor and Leader of the House.

"Within just two years, Indrajit Sehrawat (Leader of the House of SDMC) has doubled the cash and tripled the property. Mukesh Suryan [Mayor of SDMC] had tendered an unconditional apology in the Supreme Court for misbehaving and threatening the officials," Mr. Bharadwaj claimed, adding that the BJP is working persistently to loot as much as Delhi can be looted before the next elections.

11 held for duping 5L investors of ₹150 crore via mobile apps

They promised big returns on investments; Chinese nationals involved: police

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Cyber Cell has arrested 11 men, including two chartered accountants, for allegedly cheating more than 5 lakh people of over ₹150 crore in two months on the pretext of lucrative returns via apps, the police said on Wednesday.

A total of ₹11 crore of the cheated money has been blocked in various bank accounts and payment gateways, the police said.

The police took notice of various posts on social media by people across the country about two mobile applications – Power Bank and EZPlan. These apps offered lucrative returns on investment, a senior police officer said.

The Power Bank App projected itself as a Bengaluru-based start-up, but its server was found based in China.

The apps, in order to entice large number of people to invest more and more mo-



The police invested a token amount in the app and the money trail was followed. It was found that the accused had created a web of shell firms to route the money

ANYESH ROY DCP (Cyber Cell)

ney, initially gave a small payout amounting to 5% to 10% of the invested money, the police said.

People, believing the scheme to be genuine, started investing more money as well as circulating and sharing the app among their friends and relatives.

Shell companies

"The police invested a token amount in the app and the money trail was followed. It was found that the accused persons had created a web of around 25 shell companies for routing the fraud money.

These companies were located in different parts of the country and money was being moved from one account to the other to hide the trail," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell) Anyesh Roy said.

The police analysed the mobile numbers connected with the bank accounts and found that one of accused Sheikh Robin was in Uluberia, West Bengal.

On June 2, raids were conducted at multiple locations. Robin was arrested. At the same time, nine others were arrested from Delhi-NCR, in-

cluding two CAs – Avik Kedia and Ronak Bansal, the DCP said.

The CAs created over 110 shell companies and sold these companies to Chinese nationals for ₹2-₹3 lakh each, the police said.

Robin, who was contacted by the Chinese national through Telegram, initially opened a bank account for these fraudsters, but later started acting as an operative, Mr. Roy said, adding that at the time of the arrest, he was operating around 29 bank accounts.

The main Chinese handlers behind this massive scam, used to randomly contact people over various apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram and hired those interested as partners.

Names of several Chinese nationals have been revealed so far. Investigation about their whereabouts, specific roles and their large fraud network is under way, the police said.

Antibody therapy evokes good response: hospital

'Could prove to be a game changer'

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on Wednesday said that monoclonal antibody therapy was successfully used in two patients and one of the patient's parameters improved within 12 hours and was discharged.

Pooja Khosla, senior consultant, Department of Medicine of the hospital said, "Monoclonal antibody could prove to be a game changer in times to come if used at an appropriate time. It can avoid hospitalisation in high-risk groups and pro-

gression to severe disease. It can help escaping or reducing the usage of steroids and immunomodulation which would further reduce the risk of fatal infections like mucormycosis, secondary bacterial and viral infections."

Dr. Khosla said that a 36-year-old healthcare worker with high-grade fever, cough, and severe weakness was administered the therapy on the sixth day of the disease and the patient's parameter improved within 12 hours and he was discharged.

he said. Mr. Kejriwal said that a few beneficiaries who had come to the centre for vaccination, under the programme, told him that they were "very happy" with the arrangement.

The BLOs, while visiting the homes of residents, were also removing any apprehensions that they may have regarding the vaccination. If, despite this, beneficiaries did not turn up, the BLOs would visit them once more to counsel them again.

45+ age group
Under the initiative, he said, the Delhi government aimed to ensure that all residents above 45 years were vaccinated within four

weeks and, if the Delhi government had adequate doses for the 18-44 age group, residents in this category too could be vaccinated the same way.

'Can cover entire nation'
"We have an extraordinary administrative structure and electoral framework, if we are to use that then we can vaccinate the entire country in 2-3 months," he said.

"It is a very good thing that starting June 21, the Central government is going to provide us with the vaccines. So, if we get the vaccines, then we will start vaccinating everyone under this scheme," he said.

Delhi govt.'s home isolation model flawed: BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday alleged that the Delhi government had "wrongly advised" self-isolation to residents suffering from COVID-19 to hide shortcomings in the government health infrastructure.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta said 70% of the houses in Delhi measured less than 100 square yards with many occupants. "If they

had been admitted to hospitals in the initial stages of infection, the COVID death rate could have been much less," he said.

"It is a crime by the Delhi government to force people to go for home isolation...the death rate per 10 lakh is maximum in Delhi and could have been much less," Mr. Gupta alleged.

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ram-

vir Singh Bidhuri said during the first wave, temporary COVID care centres were set up and later disbanded as the AAP government had no foresight to see another wave.

Oxygen plants

"Testing and vaccinations centres could have been started at mohalla clinics or these could have served as isolation centres if they were

in proper shape," he alleged. BJP Rohini MLA Vijender Gupta said, in April, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced setting up of 44 oxygen plants before May 31, but only nine plants had been operationalised till then. "We cannot afford to lose more lives because we were caught unprepared. The Delhi government must ramp up healthcare infrastructure," he said.

Man strangulates 'pregnant' wife

Accused suspected her of having an illicit relationship

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A 20-year-old 'pregnant' woman was strangled to death allegedly by her husband in Outer Delhi's Narela after he suspected her of having an illicit relationship, the police said on Wednesday.

After killing his wife, the accused Dilshad lied next to her body. He was later arrested by the police.

The police said the couple were married for around nine months and lived in a rented house at Narela.

The woman was two-month pregnant as alleged by locals and family members but the police are verifying claims and awaiting post-mortem report to ascertain the facts.

The couple often fought as Dilshad suspected her of

having an illicit relationship with someone else, the police said.

The incident took place on early Tuesday morning. The couple engaged in a fight during which he allegedly strangled her to death.

One of the relatives who visited them on Tuesday morning got to know about the murder and soon informed the police.

'Training for teachers to reconnect with students'

Team to conduct three-day session to help them deal with fallout of pandemic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

To help teachers reconnect with their students before schools reopen for academic learning, the Delhi government will organise a training programme to help them deal with the fallout of the pandemic.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday said that the pandemic has given us the opportunity to reimagine schooling and adapt to the new emerging realities.

He was speaking at the in-

augural workshop being organised by the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace (GHFP) for Delhi government teachers.

Creating a space

"Our teachers and students have gone through a lot of pain during the time of pandemic; we want to support them in overcoming the grief. We want to create a space for our teachers and their students for sharing, listening and a meaningful dialogue before resumption of teaching-learning activities."

Mr. Sisodia said.

He added that school reopening is not just about opening books; it's about opening the heart and mind to reconnect with each other.

He stressed on the importance of teachers preparing themselves to counsel their students, support them if they are facing any challenges and help them to a stage where they are ready to resume teaching-learning activities.

As a first step of the collaboration with the GHFP, a

team of experts will conduct three days' session with a small group of mentor teachers of the Delhi government.

Mentor teachers

Thereafter, the mentor teachers will conduct similar sessions with two teachers of each school.

These two teachers will then help the fellow teachers in their own schools to initiate dialogue with their students and parents, if needed, the Delhi government said.

Peak power demand soars to 6,185 MW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Amid sultry weather and easing of lockdown curbs, Delhi's peak power demand soared to 6,185 MW on Wednesday – the highest so far this summer.

The peak demand stood at 5,559 MW on Monday, the first day of unlocking in the city. It was the first time that the power demand crossed the 5,000 MW-mark this season, said discom officials. It soared to 5,906 MW on Tuesday.

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- NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
- LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

Tea wage hike marks a month of Assam govt.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

A drive against drug-trafficking and hike in the daily wage of tea plantation workers were among a slew of measures that marked a month of the Himanta Biswa Sarma Ministry in Assam, a government spokesman said on Wednesday.

Dr. Sarma was sworn in as the 15th Chief Minister of the State on May 10, replacing Sarbananda Sonowal in the second successive BJP-led government.

'Best performance'

"Assam's performance on the COVID-19 front has been one of the best in India with more than 40 lakh people vaccinated, hospitals ramped up and oxygen supply assured. We have also initiated the process of providing ₹3,500 a month to children orphaned by the coronavirus," Water Resources Minister and government spokesperson Pijush Hazarika said.

Cong. hits out at Haryana govt. over new rules for tube-wells

Policy aimed at snatching the livelihood of the son of the soil, says Surjewala

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government's new policy for allotment of new tube-well connections for irrigating fields in the northern and southern parts of the State has come under severe criticism from the Opposition Congress.

Hitting out at the Bharatiya Janata Party-Jannayak Janta Party (BJP-JJP) government, Congress' national general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said that on May 1, 2021, a new policy for providing tube-well connections was issued by power companies in Haryana. "As per this policy aimed at snatching the livelihood of the son of the soil, if the farmer's land comes under the canal command area, then no tube-well connection will be allotted to him," he alleged.

"In the face of this grossly anti-farmer policy, tube-well



Cong. leader R.S. Surjewala

connections will no longer be sanctioned in Ambala, Yamuna Nagar, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Kaithal, Jind, Hisar, Fatehabad, Bhiwani, Dadri, Narnaul, Mahendragarh, Mewat, Gurgaon etc. because in these districts, 80-90% of the area comes under the flow or lift command area of canal irrigation," said Mr. Surjewala, adding that the farmers of northern and southern Haryana would be most affected by the order. Also, a condition included

in the policy says tube-well motors of over 30 BHP (brake horse power) would not be sanctioned in future. They are completely banned. In the whole of southern Haryana and in the whole of Ahirwal, especially in Bhiwani, Dadri, Mahendragarh, Rewari, Mewat and Gurgaon, the groundwater table is so low that most motors are of 40-50 BHP. "This order means that now onwards no farmer will be sanctioned a tube-well connection in southern Haryana," he added.

'Govt. should apologise'

Mr. Surjewala said the State government should immediately withdraw the policy and apologise to the farmers of the State for their anti-farmer stance.

Former Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Bhupinder Singh Hooda said that the

government should plan to provide relief to farmers instead of experimenting with policies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Farmers left clueless'

"It is being reported that connections will be given only to those farmers who get a 'no objection certificate' from the Irrigation Department. In such a situation, farmers who deposited the security [amount] many years ago are left clueless and wondering what to do next," he said.

"The government is changing the rules and standards time and again to thwart them [the farmers]. Sometimes the standards of electric motors are changed while at other times, rules on ground water level are changed. Farmers do not even have the freedom to take the motor of their choice," Mr. Hooda said.

Asif murder case: Karat condemns attempts to give communal twist

She leads a delegation to Nuh to meet the victim's kin

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GURUGRAM

Former Rajya Sabha MP and Communist Party of India (Marxist) Politburo member Brinda Karat on Wednesday strongly condemned the alleged attempts by certain forces to give communal spin to Asif murder case in Nuh and interfere with the course of law.

Ms. Karat, along with CPI leader Amarjeet Kaur, led a delegation to Nuh to meet the family of the deceased and also called upon the Deputy Commissioner demanding that communal harmony be upheld in the region.

Expressing condolence over the death of Asif, who was kidnapped and murdered on May 16, Ms. Karat said attempts were being made by certain forces to give communal spin to the incident and protect the accused and vitiate the atmosphere of the village and the area.

Ms. Karat said Asif was not



CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat meeting the family members of Asif in Nuh on Wednesday. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

murdered for his religious beliefs, but for opposing the criminal elements in the village. She said her party would raise the issue at all possible platforms.

Meeting with DC

The delegation also met the Deputy Commissioner demanding the arrest of all the accused in the case and upholding the communal harmony in the region. It said that provocative videos were being uploaded on so-

cial media platforms and caste panchayats held to create communal rift and protect the accused.

CPI State secretary D.S. Kashyap and CPI(M) zonal secretary Major S.L. Prajapati were part of the delegation.

Asif, a resident of Nuh's Khera Khalilpur, was returning home from a medical store on May 16 in a car when he was waylaid and kidnapped. He was later found dead at Nangli village in Sohna.

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LEGAL NOTICE

In the Court of Sh. Ashok Kapoor, Principal Judge Family Court, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar
CNR No-PBSB01-004253-2019
Next Date: 09.09.2021
Amrit Kaur W/o Hardeep Singh Chahal R/o Village Herian, Tehsil Nawanshahr, Distt. SBS Nagar, presently residing at Italy, through attorney Joga Singh S/o Gurdial Singh, R/o Village Mander, Tehsil Banga, Distt. SBS Nagar
Vs.
Hardeep Singh Chahal S/o Sahib Singh R/o Village Chahal Khurd, Tehsil Nawanshahr, Distt. SBS Nagar, presently residing at MRSRL VIA DELLE ROBINIE 2, VEROLANNOVA 25028 ITALY
Petition under section 13 of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as amended upto date for dissolution of the marriage by decree of divorce.
Notice to: Hardeep Singh Chahal S/o Sahib Singh R/o Village Chahal Khurd, Tehsil Nawanshahr, Distt. SBS Nagar, presently residing at MRSRL VIA DELLE ROBINIE 2, VEROLANNOVA 25028 ITALY
In above titled petition the respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that the respondent (s) should appear in person or through counsel on 22.09.2021 at 10.00 A.M.
For detail log on https://highcourtdelhi.gov.in/trs=district_notice&district=sbsnagar
(Ashok Kapoor)
Principal Judge Family Court Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE
I, Hawa Singh S/o Sh. Ramdhan R/o Flat No. 12, Type -4 N.S.I.T Campus , Sector- 3 , Dwarka New Delhi-110078, have disowned my son ATUL VASHIST from all my movable / immovable properties and if any person will deal with them, then I will not be responsible for their acts.

PERSONAL CHANGE OF NAME

I, NIRMALA dependents of Amit Kumar Gupta resident of village & P.O.- Kailtha, Distt. Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh-209206 have changed by name from Nirmala to Mihlesh Kumar. vide affidavit dated 08/06/2021 before District court Dwarak, Delhi.

LEGAL NOTICE

In the Court of Sh. Ashok Kapoor, Principal Judge Family Court, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar
CNR No-PBSB01-000360-2020
Next Date: 15.09.2021
Sukhjiet Kaur W/o Gurwinder Singh S/o Sohan Singh R/o Namo Malian, Distt. Kapurthala
Vs.
Gurwinder Singh S/o Sohan Singh R/o Namo Malian, Distt. Kapurthala
2nd Address: Care of Principal, Government Senior Secondary School, Bhano Ki, Tehsil Pugauna, Distt. Kapurthala
Petition under section 13 of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as amended upto date for dissolution of the marriage between the parties by way of decree of divorce.
Notice to: Gurwinder Singh S/o Sohan Singh R/o Namo Malian, Distt. Kapurthala, Distt. Kapurthala
2nd Address: Care of Principal, Government Senior Secondary School, Bhano Ki, Tehsil Pugauna, Distt. Kapurthala
In above titled petition the respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that the respondent (s) should appear in person or through counsel on 15.09.2021 at 10.00 A.M.
For detail log on https://highcourtdelhi.gov.in/trs=district_notice&district=sbsnagar
Principal Judge Family Court Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar

In the Court of Sh. Ashok Kapoor, Principal Judge Family Court, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar
CNR No-PBSB01-003005-2020
Next Date: 23.08.2021
Manjeet Kaur W/o Amandeep Ram & D/o Jindraj Pal R/o H.No-8-1/15, Garishankar Road, Nawanshahr, Tehsil Nawanshahr, Distt. SBS Nagar
Vs.
Amandeep Ram S/o Sodhi Ram R/o Village Bhajal, Tehsil Garishankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur
Petition under section 13 of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, as amended upto date for dissolution of the marriage by decree of divorce.
Notice to: Amandeep Ram S/o Sodhi Ram R/o Village Bhajal, Tehsil Garishankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur
In above titled petition the respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that the respondent (s) should appear in person or through counsel on 23.08.2021 at 10.00 A.M.
For detail log on https://highcourtdelhi.gov.in/trs=district_notice&district=sbsnagar
(Ashok Kapoor)
Principal Judge Family Court Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shail Trikhra, inform that my husband (Late) Brig. Sheel Kumar Trikhra, S/o Kundan Lal Trikhra, R/O 1517, Park View Apartment Arun Vihar, Noida unfortunately passed away on 08/07/2017, in Greater Noida. I request "SUPRETECH COMPANY LTD", to transfer this flat 1404, CB-1 CAPETOWN at GH-01/A, Sector-74, Noida, Dist. Gautham Buddha Nagar (UP), in the name of 'Shail Trikhra' and 'Mr. Harun Trikhra', S/o, (late) Brig. Sheel Kumar Trikhra and 'Shail Trikhra'. If any body has objection, he/she may contact Mr. Vaibhav Mittal of 'SUPRETECH LTD' E-SQUARE, C-2, Sector-96, Noida, within 15 Days of this notice being published. Shail Trikhra, W/o (Late) Brig. Sheel Kumar Trikhra. Dinesh Sharma, -Advocate Noida, (M)-9810257421

Project to help children who lost parents

The Haryana State Legal Services Authority on Wednesday launched a project to create awareness about the rights and benefits for children who have lost their parents due to Covid pandemic.

Kicking off the project, "Hope: Sangharsh Se Utkarsh Tak Hum Aapke Saath Hain", through virtual mode, Justice Rajan Gupta, Judge, Punjab & Haryana High Court and Executive Chairman of HSLSA said such children were in need of special attention of the society and their protection and rehabilitation was one of the major issues right now.

Action plan

As per the action plan under the project, the District Legal Services Authorities will identify these children and try to unite them with their close surviving relatives. If that is not possible, the child will be rehabilitated in the child care institutions and adoption facilitated as per guidelines.

BJP, JD(U) spar over blast at madrasa

Police suspect an IED might have caused the explosion

AMARNATH TEWARY PATNA

A day after a powerful explosion in a madrasa in Bihar's Banka district, ruling NDA alliance partners in the State, the BJP and the JD(U), on Wednesday came face to face on the incident. Police suspect an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) might have caused the blast.

Demanding that such educational institutions be banned across the State, BJP MLA from Bishfi in Madhubani district, Hari Bhushan Thakur, said, "In madrasas and mosques in Bihar, education of terrorism is being given. Training to make bombs and to incite violence is given in madrasas. Children should be taken out from madrasas and given common education."

Probe demanded

Mr. Thakur, in a video post, added, "The minority community in Bihar has been harassing Dalits. Incidents of Jamui, Gopalganj and Purnia are examples. I want a thorough investigation into the incident to ascertain under what circumstances the explosion took place." JD(U) leader and party



A police officer at the collapsed madrasa in Banka district of Bihar. •PTI

MLC Gulam Rasool Balyawi criticised the BJP MLA's comment. He said, "Those making such comments should be sent to mental asylum."

"During the election, the BJP men do not see mosques and madrasas but soon after winning they come to their real agenda," Mr. Balyawi said.

On Tuesday, a powerful explosion took place in a madrasa near a mosque in Chamreli Navtolia village under the Banka town police station limits. The madrasa building collapsed and the Imam, Abdul Sattar Mobin, was killed in the explosion. The adjacent mosque was

'Give incentives to counter jab hesitancy'

It could be extra ration or work: activists

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR

Health activists attached to Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA) here on Wednesday called for providing incentives to counter COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in the rural areas, while affirming that it would help accelerate the pace of vaccination among the villagers who were reluctant to get the jab because of lack of knowledge or out of suspicion.

The JSA, which functions as the Rajasthan chapter of the People's Health Movement, said the incentives could be in the form of additional ration from the public distribution system, extra days of MGNREGA work, such as 150 days of guaranteed wage employment instead of 100 days in a financial year and hot cooked meals or additional ration to pregnant and lactating women from Anganwadis.

Chhaya Pachauli, director of the voluntary group Prayas, said the reports had been received from some districts about the rural population being coerced by the

administration to get vaccinated with the threat that they would not be given ration or MGNREGA wages if they did not get inoculated.

Violation of right to food

"This is not only exploitative but also amounts to sheer violation of people's right to food and employment," she said. The JSA felt that the government should instead focus on the measures which aimed at educating the people about vaccines and dispelling their myths and fears.

The provision for incentivising the people could motivate those who were reluctant to get vaccinated and the option of getting vaccinated and pushes them to make up their minds quickly, said Ms. Pachauli, adding that such an approach could help increase the vaccination rate and reduce the waste of vials. The JSA has shot off letters with these suggestions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Medical and Health Minister Raghu Sharma.

Advertisement

District Health & Family Welfare Society, District - Mahendragarh at Narnaul
District Health & Family Welfare Society, District- Mahendragarh at Narnaul invites application from the eligible candidates for filling up of the following post in the District Mahendragarh, Haryana contract basis or initially up to 31/03/2022 as per approval received in NHM Haryana ROP 2021-22, whichever is earlier.

Sr. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Date, Time and Place of Walk-In Interview
1	Paediatrician (SNCU)	1	Every Monday
2	Medical Officer (NRC)	1	Every Monday

The interested candidates are advised to visit website www.nhmharyana.gov.in for details of post and download the application form.
Last date for submitting of duly filled application form is every Monday upto 10:00 A.M. in the Office of Civil Surgeon, Narnaul.

Civil Surgeon, Narnaul
PRDH 1058/11/60/2022/3236/1997

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE
REMEMBRANCE
NK GURCHARAN SINGH, SM (G), (10 JUN 2020)
NK Gurcharan Singh, SM (G) made the supreme sacrifice in service of the Nation on the Line of Control on 10 Jun 2020. In fond memory of our gallant soldier, the entire NABHA AKAL fraternity salutes him. CO and all ranks 14 PUNJAB (NABHA AKAL)
In memory of your loved ones
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SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE FOR ENGINEERING WORKS
Sr.No.(1) E-Tender No. DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-22-22, Date 01.06.2021
Work : Supply of welding portion and welding of rail joints by alumino thermic SKV process (Single shot Crucible with Automatic Tapping Thimble technology) including supervision, tools and plants and consumables etc. under the jurisdiction of ADEN/CENTRAL/BILASPUR. Tender value (In Rs.): 90,77,748.00/-. Completion Period : 12 Months
Start date of Submission of Tender From 11:00 hrs. on 14-06-2021. Last date of Submission of Tender : Upto 11:00 hrs. on 28-06-2021
The complete information of above e-Tender Notice is available over websites https://www.reps.gov.in Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders.
Div. Railway Manager (Engg.) CPR/10/42 S.E.C. Railway/BSP
South East Central Railway @SecRail

Dihing Patkai is Assam's 7th National Park

It has 47 species each of reptiles and mammals, including tiger and Orang.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The 234.26-sq. km Dihing Patkai straddling eastern Assam's Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts is a major elephant habitat and 310 species of butterflies have been recorded there. The park has 47 species each of reptiles and mammals, including the tiger and clouded leopard.

Illegal coal mining

Dihing Patkai, in focus a year ago for illegal coal mining in the vicinity, encompasses the erstwhile Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary, the Jyepore Reserve Forest and the western block of the Upper Dihing Reserve Forest.

"The forest village area diverted under Forest Conservation Act has been excluded. Short stretches of the Dirak and Buri Dihing rivers have been included in the park," State Environment and Forest Minister Parimal Suklabaidya said.

The newly notified National Park will be administered by the Soraipung Range of Digboi Forest Division and Jyepore Range of Dibrugarh Forest Division. Additional anti-poaching camps and manpower are being provided, the Minister said. Raimona, on the other hand, will be administered by the Kachugaon Forest Division of the BTC.

झारखण्ड सरकार
झारखण्ड ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य मिशन समिति
स्वास्थ्य चिकित्सा शिक्षा एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, झारखण्ड नामकुम, राँची
फोन नं०- 0651-2261000
मेल आईडी- nhmjharkhand2018@gmail.com
पत्रांक :- 9/RCH-273/2021 दिनांक:-08.06.2021
Cancellation
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सूचित करना है कि ई- निविदा सं० NHM/Nam/20/2021 (Procurement, Installation, Commissioning and testing of Oxygen Plants) दिनांक 24.05.2021 का प्रकाशन किया गया था परन्तु अपरिहार्य कारणों से उक्त निविदा को निरस्त किया जाता है।
Sd/- निदेशक चित्त सह प्रभारी पदाधिकारी, प्रोक्योरमेंट कोषांश
PR 247717 Jharkhand Rural Health Mission Society(21-22).D

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male namely Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, was found on 05.06.2021 at Ward No. 13 Medicine Ward Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi. In this regard DD No. 22A dated 05.06.2021 has been lodged at Police Station, Anand Vihar Railway Station, Delhi. Identification of unidentified dead body of male is as under:
Name: Unknown, Age: 40 Years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing: Hospital Cloth.
If anyone have any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned.
SHO
Police Station, Anand Vihar Railway Station, Delhi
DP/160/RLY/2021 Ph.: 011-28910701, 8750871314

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General Public is hereby informed that one person namely Mohd. Anwar S/o Abdul , R/o H. No. 2644, Mohalla Nihariyan, Behind S.N. Marg, Ajmeri Gate, Delhi has been missing since 21.05.2021 Delhi. In this regard a case vides DD No. 71-A dated 21.05.2021 has been registered at PS. Kamla Market, Delhi. The description of missing person is as under:
Age : 55 yrs., Built: Medium, Height : 5'1", Face : Round, Complexion : Wheatish, Wearing : Green colour lining shirt, green colour pant and slippers in feet.
If anyone having any clue/information, kindly inform to the following.
Website : http://cbi.nic.in
e-mail : cbi@cbi.gov.in
Fax : 011-24368639
Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641
SHO P.S., Kamla Market, Delhi Ph : 011-22230623, 8750870424
DP/824/CD/2021

IN BRIEF



Vigilance to investigate KSRTC money case

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has ordered a Vigilance probe into the alleged misappropriation of ₹100.75 crore from the accounts of Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) during the 2010-13 period. The clearance for probe was given on Wednesday.

Tree felling: HC declines to stay proceedings

KOCHI
The Kerala High Court on Wednesday refused to stay the proceedings pending before the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court, Sulthan Bathery, in the cases registered in connection with the felling of centuries-old rosewood trees from private plantations at Muttill South village in Wayanad.

Naidu flays demolition of school in Vizag

VIJAYAWADA
Telugu Desam Party national president N. Chandrababu Naidu has urged Chief Secretary Adityanath Das to come to the rescue of the differently-abled students of Hidden Sprouts School in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. In a letter to the Chief Secretary, Mr. Naidu said the government targeted the no-profit school for differently-abled students.

New plant species spotted in Wagamon

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
A new plant species belonging to the coffee family spotted in the scenic Wagamon hills in Kerala has been named *Argostemma quarantena* to commemorate the millions who have died in the pandemic. A herbaceous species from the family Rubiaceae, *Argostemma quarantena* was found along the Idukki-Kottayam border.

Directive withdrawn in Lakshadweep

Controversial order required the deployment of government staff on fishing boats

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOCHI

In the face of criticism, the Director of Port, Shipping and Navigation in the Lakshadweep administration has quietly withdrawn the order for the deployment of government staff on fishing boats.

Director Sachin Sharma also reversed the May 28 order by which the security around ports, jetties, ships and other vessels was raised to level-2 "on the basis of recent intelligence inputs".

In an e-mail message to the Deputy Director (S&T), Kochi; Assistant Directors; port assistants on the island; the CSO of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited (LDCL); and the Assistant Commandant of the Central Industrial Security



No takers: The Lakshadweep Government Employees' Union took exception to the order.

Force (CISF) in Kochi on June 7, Mr. Sharma cited the orders of May 28 and June 2 "regarding strengthening of security in ports/ships and jetties" and said "as per further inputs, all concerned

may revert back to standard protocol and SOPs [standard operating procedures]".

The Lakshadweep Government Employees' Union had recently taken exception to the order asking for go-

vernment employees to go on board fishing vessels for intelligence collection.

The order was also criticised by fishers' forums. Sources said maritime security agencies were also

BJP leaders call on Kerala Governor

Party appears to rally behind State chief Surendran

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The BJP on Wednesday appeared to spring to the defence of K. Surendran, the party's embattled Kerala president.

A delegation of BJP leaders led by K. Suresh Kumar met Governor Arif Mohammad Khan to spotlight "gross abuse of police machinery by the Left Democratic Front [LDF] government to tarnish the BJP and to harass its leaders".

A senior leader said the high-profile visit to Raj Bhavan was a clear signal that the BJP had rallied behind Mr. Surendran. The party would politically and legally battle out the attempts to



A leader said the meet was a clear signal that the BJP had rallied behind Mr. Surendran.

Surendran's visit to New Delhi sparks rumours

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

BJP Kerala president K. Surendran's presence in New Delhi on Wednesday triggered speculation about an impending leadership change in the party's

"embattled" State unit.

The national leadership had summoned Mr. Surendran and some in the party said his position was precarious. But another BJP leader said his visit to New Delhi was planned.

dran and his family to punish him for campaigning against the LDF on various sensitive issues, including the Sabarimala and the gold smuggling case.

The police had slapped a case against Mr. Surendran in Majeswaram, falsely accusing him of bribing a political rival to withdraw his candidacy for the Assembly constituency.

The leaders alleged that the police had prevented the BJP from holding its core committee meeting in Kochi on June 6 citing COVID-19 protocol.

The BJP leaders requested Mr. Khan to "take note of the oppressive, anti-democratic and illegal actions of the State government and to take appropriate remedial measures".

Uddhav warns of stern action against industries not following safety norms

Ensure compensation reaches kin of 17 labourers killed in Pune factory fire: CM

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE PUNE

Chemical factory owners must stringently adhere to safety norms, said Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday. He directed the Pune district administration to ensure that the compensation announced by the State government reached the kin of the 17 labourers who were charred to death at a chemical manufacturing company in the district's Mulshi area. "Industrial safety standards must be seriously reviewed in the aftermath of the explosion at a chemical company at Urwar which resulted in the tragic deaths," he said. The incident occurred



Uddhav Thackeray

late afternoon on Monday when two explosions caused a powerful blaze inside SVS Aqua Technologies, a chemical manufacturing company. Most of those killed were women while five other labourers were seriously injured. The government had announced an ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh for the kin of each of the

deceased. The Chief Minister warned of stern action against errant industries that neglected safety norms and regulations.

He said the committee comprising officials of the Pune district administration, which had been constituted to probe the accident, should submit its report immediately after a comprehensive inquiry.

"The administration should also take action to provide assistance to the families of the deceased and provide financial assistance to their relatives as soon as possible. The chemical industrial safety standards should be reviewed frequently in in-

dustrial estates."

Owner in police custody
A local court remanded Nikunj Shah, one of the owners of the company, in police custody till June 13. Mr. Shah was arrested on Tuesday following questioning under relevant Sections of the IPC for "culpable homicide not amounting to murder".

The preliminary probe revealed gross negligence on the company's part in adhering to basic fire safety norms and building permission rules. Authorities said the premises had no emergency exit doors, which had led to the workers being tragically charred to death when the fire began to spread.

HC questions Centre, State on vaccination SOP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday asked the State and Union governments what steps they had taken to inform citizens about the Centre's standard operating procedure (SOP) for vaccinating people without the seven prescribed identity cards.

A Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and G.S. Kulkarni was hearing a bunch of public interest litigation petitions (PILs) on improving access to the CoWIN web portal for booking vaccination slots.

It asked the Union government to inform the court what steps were taken to cover the mentally ill and those who could not give a consent without a legal guardian, under its vaccination drive.

The court was informed that seven identity cards, including Aadhaar and PAN, could be used to register for vaccination on the CoWIN portal.

Man detained under MPDA Act in Raigad

RAINA ASSAINAR NAVI MUMBAI

For the first time in Raigad district, a man has been detained under the Maharashtra Prevention of Dangerous Activities Act for his involvement in criminal activities.

The move was proposed by the Raigad police which was approved by Collector Nidhi Choudhari and sanctioned by the State government.

peevd with the order, which was interpreted as interfering with their jurisdictional powers.

The June 2 communication was about a security review meeting chaired by an Advisor to the Union Territory Administrator. It said decisions had been taken to deploy government staff on fishing craft, strengthen security measures to monitor local fishing boats, and intensify checking of motorised and passenger vessels.

It had also ordered measures for the installation of CCTV cameras at berthing ports and the helibase, and the baggage and passenger checking facility at the Mangalore and Beypore ports.

The LDCL had been asked to "inform ship masters to remain vigilant and alert".

Mucormycosis patients lack hospital beds

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU

The dearth of treatment facilities and the supply of medicines in many cases is forcing mucormycosis patients across districts in Karnataka to seek medical help in Bengaluru.

However, when they arrive at the State's capital, most are unable to find a bed as they are unaware that District Health Officers (DHOs) have to be alerted so that beds can be organised. Moreover, the procedure where the DHO writes to his counterpart in Bengaluru is proving to be a hurdle. DHOs are hesitant to write referral letters as they will be held accountable for not being able to treat patients in their districts, sources said.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18:00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Assam, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Nagaland, Manipur, Marathwada, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal and Lakshadweep

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	14	34.1	25.8	Kozhikode	1	33.6	25.2
Ahmedabad	39.0	28.4		Kurnool	3	35.2	26.1
Aizawl	29.0	17.8		Lucknow	3	35.6	29.7
Allahabad	34.7	29.0		Madurai	3	37.7	25.1
Bengaluru	29.5	20.5		Mangaluru	3.6	30.0	22.2
Bhopal	36.2	36.0	21.5	Mumbai	60	26.4	25.4
Bhubaneswar	32.8	24.8		Mysuru	3	33.0	20.2
Chandigarh	42.5	30.7		New Delhi	4	42.2	31.4
Chennai	38.6	27.7		Patna	40.4	32.4	21.4
Coimbatore	33.7	23.4		Port Blair	89	27.9	23.2
Dehradun	36.7	25.2		Puducherry	4	37.9	25.2
Gangtok	114	21.1	16.4	Pune	0.1	25.8	23.2
Goa	34	27.5	23.4	Raipur	2.6	41.0	25.2
Guwahati	33.5	25.9		Ranchi	3	32.6	22.6
Hubballi	27.0	22.0		Shillong	1	25.0	18.1
Hyderabad	31.0	25.5		Shimla	3	31.0	24.5
Imphal	32.2	20.7		Srinagar	3	34.7	19.8
Jaipur	41.6	30.4		Thiruvananthapuram	1	38.5	24.6
Kochi	11	31.0	24.4	Tiruchi	1	38.3	26.6
Kohima	27.5	18.2		Vijayawada	3	38.2	28.6
Kolkata	0.6	33.8	26.4	Visakhapatnam	3	39.2	29.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing Yesterday

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	47	134	47	65	65	■
Bengaluru	3	33	39	28	65	■
Chennai	7	5	46	45	69	■
Delhi	9	24	30	330	358	■
Hyderabad	1	67	5	23	38	■
Kolkata	10	16	30	61	161	■
Lucknow	10	43	68	184	161	■
Mumbai	48	15	20	20	30	■
Pune	5	1	70	148	97	■
Visakhapatnam	16	48	25	52	98	■

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

Lifting of liquor ban irks AAP leader

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PUNE

Hitting out at the MVA government for lifting the six-year-old liquor ban in Chandrapur district, Pune-based Right To Information activist and Aam Aadmi Party leader Vijay Kumbhar said that the State, which had been deferring taking decisions on important issues for some months now, had taken swift action to lift the alcohol ban. Mr. Kumbhar said the government had also directed the State excise commissioner to issue necessary guidelines separately to make the process of licence execution transparent.

Fight COVID like a surgical strike: HC

Court asks Maharashtra govt. about door-to-door vaccination

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday asked the Maharashtra government if it had applied for permission to give door-to-door vaccination, and told the Central government, "COVID-19 is the common enemy, and you must consider the battle as a surgical strike!"

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni was hearing a public interest litigation petition filed by two city-based lawyers that sought vaccination at home for those above 75 years, bedridden or wheelchair-bound.

Advocate Dhruvi Kapadia, representing the petitioners, told the court that

Kerala had been conducting vaccination for bedridden people and the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation had started door-to-door vaccination.

The court asked the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) how a senior political member got vaccinated at the beginning of the drive.

BMC's counsel Anil Sakhare said he would inform tomorrow.

The court said, "We want to know today. We are hearing the matter today. We are talking about your model to the entire country and are appreciating your efforts. Did Kerala wait for the nod from the Central government? Either the defence can be that you have given

him [politician] a different vaccine, or you have nothing to do with it then we will ask the State".

The Bench told Additional Solicitor General of India Anil Singh, "You have taken a decision for near to door vaccination. You have agreed that COVID-19 is the common enemy. You must consider the battle as a surgical strike! We know the areas and the people who may be carrying the virus. We should go to the borders and fight! We see that decisions are being taken by the Centre, but they are delayed. So many States are doing this. Then why not make it uniform for all States?"

The State would reply on June 11.

Maharashtra's active cases dip to 1.61 lakh

State reports 10,989 fresh cases; death toll reaches 1,01,833

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PUNE

Maharashtra continued to report low case surges, recording 10,989 new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday as opposed to 16,379 recoveries. The State's active case tally dipped further to 1,61,864.

However, the State's total death toll has crossed the one lakh mark, climbing to 1,01,833, with the State's case fatality rate rising to 1.74%.

A total of 661 deaths were added to the State's progressive death toll, of which 170 occurred in the last 48 hours and a further 91 were from the past week. As many as 400 fatalities have been ad-

ded in the ongoing 'reconciliation' process, as per the State Health Department.

The State's total cases have reached 58,31,781 while its cumulative recoveries have climbed to 55,97,304 with the recovery rate going up to 95.45%.

"Of a total 3,71,28,093 laboratory samples tested thus far, 58,63,880 (with the average case positivity falling incrementally to 15.79%) have returned positive with over 2.21 lakh samples being tested in the last 24 hours," State Surveillance Officer Dr. Pradeep Awate said.

Pune witnessed a heightened spike, reporting more than 1,300 new cases taking its total case tally to

10,30,325. As per the State Health Department figures, 27 deaths were recorded as the toll rose to 13,638. According to district authorities, the active cases have declined below 20,000 while the death count has touched 17,700.

Mumbai recorded 785 new cases to take its total tally to 7,12,840 while the active count has increased slightly to 17,939. As many as 27 fatalities took the city's toll to 15,033. In western Maharashtra, Kolhapur continued to see big surges, with more than 1,400 new cases taking its total cases to 1,27,113 of whom 17,822 are active. Forty deaths saw the toll go up to 3,923.

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER NATIONAL HIGHWAYS, BLOCK-D, NIRMAN BHAWAN, NIGAM VIHAR, SHIMLA-171002

Notice Inviting Bid

Bid No. PW-CE-NH-CTR-Tender Notice/EPC-31/2021-751-59 Dated: 08-06-2021

RFP for Construction of 180.0 mtr. Span bowstring bridge on Markanda at Ch. 64/630 on NH-72 (New NH-07) in the State of Himachal Pradesh. on EPC mode (Tender Job No. EPC 31/2021).

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways through Chief Engineer NH HPPWD Shimla is engaged in the development of National Highways and as part of this Endeavour, it has been decided to undertake the work for Construction of 180.0 mtr. Span bowstring bridge on Markanda at Ch. 64/630 on NH-72 (New NH-07) in the State of Himachal Pradesh. on EPC mode (Tender Job No. EPC 31/2021) through an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Contract.

Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department through Chief Engineer NH HPPWD Shimla now invites bids from eligible contractors for the following project:

State	NH No.	Job No.	Name of work	Estimated Civil Cost of Project*	Completion period	Defect Liability Period
Himachal Pradesh	07	EPC-31/2021	Construction of 180.0 mtr. Span bowstring bridge on Markanda at Ch. 64/630 on NH-72 (New NH-07) in the State of Himachal Pradesh. on EPC mode (Tender Job No. EPC 31/2021).	Rs. 24.97* Crore	2 Year	10 years

*The Estimated Project Cost is the Civil Cost of the work without GST and is used only for Evaluation Purpose. The bid should be quoted as per BoQ inclusive of GST.

The complete BID document can be viewed / downloaded from official portal of e-procurement portal of MoRTH &H (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/>) from 08-06-2021 (1800 Hrs. IST) to 23-07-2021 (upto 1100 Hrs IST). Bidder must submit its Technical bid & Financial Bid at (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app/>) and also Technical Bid at (<https://bids.gov.in/>) on or before 23-07-2021 (upto 1100 Hours IST). It is mandatory to submit the Technical Bids on (<https://bids.gov.in/>) also. Bids received online shall be opened on 24-07-2021 (at 1130 Hours IST).

Bid through any other mode shall not be entertained. However, Bid Securing Declaration, document fee receipt deposited through BharatKosh / NTRP only, Power of Attorney and Joint Bidding Agreement etc. shall be submitted physically by the Bidder on or before 24-07-2021 (at 1100 Hours IST). Please note that the Chief Engineer, NH, HPPWD, Shimla-2 reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the BIDs without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Officer in-charge For and on Behalf of Governor of HP Chief Engineer, National Highway, Nirman Bhawan HPPWD, Shimla-171002 Phone/ Fax 0177-2629416 e-mail: ce-nh-hp@nic.in HP / 1400/21-22

Sd/- Chief Engineer (NH) H.P.P.W.D. Shimla-2.



At home

Governments must protect the interests of children orphaned by COVID-19

Disasters may bring out the innate generosity of people, but sometimes even well-intentioned initiatives may go wrong. Many believe that children orphaned by calamities are free for adoption and that growing with well-off adoptive parents will give them a shot at a better life than they can get from impoverished surviving relatives. However, adoption can be an option only when the children's safety and welfare can be ensured. By ordering that no adoption of children orphaned since last year should be permitted contrary to the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, the Supreme Court has made one more benign intervention to mitigate the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. It had earlier passed various orders on the economic and health aspects of the pandemic, including those aimed at the protection of migrant workers, prisoners and jail staff and the people at large. When its attention was drawn to advertisements and messages inviting people to adopt children who have lost one or both parents to COVID-19, the court warned that no such adoption could be permitted without the involvement of the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA). It is important that the order is adhered to, as past experience shows that the danger of children falling victim to traffickers under the guise of adoption is ever-present. Even when they reach the hands of genuine adoptive parents, there is a possibility that they will be uprooted out of their social and cultural milieu through inter-country adoptions without the option of growing up with a relative or adoptive parents closer home being explored.

Many may recall that following the December 2004 tsunami, there were ill-advised campaigns calling upon the people to adopt children rendered orphans in several Asian countries. It took a while for some affected countries to wake up to the reality that lax enforcement of adoption rules may have led to child trafficking in some cases. In the present situation, it appears that the Union government and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights are quite alive to the problem. The NCPDR is collecting details of children affected by the pandemic from all State governments and the administration of Union Territories. It has drawn the Supreme Court's attention to public announcements by some unscrupulous agencies inviting interested people to adopt the children and also disclosing the children's identities. The court's order asking all authorities to prevent illegal adoptions and fund-collection in the names of the affected children came in response to this. The court has also passed orders for the continuance of the children's education and other steps to coordinate the implementation of schemes in their favour. These orders are a necessary reminder to the authorities that they have a special responsibility to protect the interests and welfare of children in times like this.

Encouraging accord

The political will shown by G7 to ensure fairness in revenue sharing is a good augury

The Finance Ministers of the G7 nations appear to have heeded the advice to 'never let a good crisis go to waste' when they agreed last week to set a global minimum tax of at least 15%. With the COVID-19 pandemic having caused the world economy to shrink by an estimated 3.5% in 2020 and forced most countries to dip into their coffers to mitigate the fallout, the seven richest nations opted to use the opportune moment to plug a key loophole in the international tax regime. In a communique, the G7 Ministers stressed that as part of efforts to secure a 'Safe and Prosperous Future for All' they would strongly back the broader efforts under way through the G20/OECD to address tax challenges arising from globalisation and digitalisation of the economy. The rapid and relentless march of technological advancement, especially in the domain of global communications and connectivity, has resulted in a world economy where the digital sphere, estimated in 2016 at \$11.5 trillion or over one-sixth of global GDP, is exponentially outpacing overall economic growth. The increasing digitalisation has, however, exacerbated the challenges to taxing multinational corporations, which have sought to minimise their total tax outgo by recognising a bulk of their revenue in low-tax jurisdictions.

The OECD, which is with the G20 spearheading the 'Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting' initiative aimed at ending tax avoidance, estimates that countries are collectively deprived of as much as \$240 billion in tax revenue annually due to avoidance by MNCs. As the OECD's Secretary-General noted in a statement welcoming the G7 deal, such distortions "can only be effectively addressed through a multilaterally agreed solution". The G7 also agreed on "an equitable allocation of taxing rights, with market countries awarded taxing rights on at least 20% of profit exceeding a 10% margin for the largest and most profitable multinational enterprises". For India, estimated to be losing more than \$10 billion in revenue each year to "global tax abuse" by MNCs according to the Tax Justice Network and one of the more than 90 countries that have joined the BEPS framework, a wider agreement at next month's meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and central bank Governors could have far-reaching implications. India could benefit from the levy of taxes on MNCs including technology and Internet economy giants, which have taken advantage of the loopholes in the global tax system. While there are still wrinkles to be ironed out, including the issue of local levies on digital transactions, the political will to ensure greater fairness and equity in revenue sharing is a positive augury.

Strong-arm tactics weaken democracy

The Central government's designs in West Bengal serve to undermine the structure of federalism



RONOJOY SEN

The results of the bitterly contested West Bengal elections were declared in early May. It has been more than a month since the Trinamool Congress won with a massive mandate, but the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Central government still seem unable to get over the BJP's loss in the State. The BJP has tried every tactic in the book to put the Mamata Banerjee government under pressure, including resurrecting corruption charges against four leaders (three from the Trinamool and one who was formerly with the party), and serving a show-cause notice to the now-retired Chief Secretary of West Bengal. The State Governor has played a partisan role both before and after the election. The Centre's actions could be seen at one level as cynical politicking at a time when all its energy should be focused on mitigating the impact of COVID-19. At another level, these designs serve to undermine the structure of federalism and democracy.

Let's look at the events – of the recent arrests and the show-cause notice, and the Governor's role. The latter is an issue with historical antecedents and is not unique to West Bengal or the current BJP government.

Arrests of Trinamool leaders
On May 17, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested three Trinamool leaders, including two State Ministers, in connection with

the Narada sting operation, carried out in 2014, showing top Trinamool leaders allegedly taking bribes. The footage had surfaced before the 2016 West Bengal Assembly elections. In 2017, the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate launched investigations into the scam. It is the timing of the arrests now that has raised suspicion, as did the sanction for prosecution given by West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar to the CBI just days after the election result. Moreover, the CBI's failure to proceed against former Trinamool leaders Suwendu Adhikari and Mukul Roy, both of whom are accused in the case but have defected to the BJP, has justifiably provoked allegations of political vendetta and bias on the CBI's part.

A bureaucrat in controversy
The second event that has caused friction between the Trinamool government and the Centre is the controversy over the former Chief Secretary of West Bengal, Alapan Bandyopadhyay. Mr. Bandyopadhyay was scheduled to retire on May 31 but had been given a three-month extension by the Centre on the State government's request. However, days before his original retirement date, he was unexpectedly asked to report to the Department of Personnel and Training in New Delhi on May 31. This order came hours after Ms. Banerjee skipped a review meeting on Cyclone Yaas with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Kalaikunda air base in West Bengal. While the rules allow the recall of IAS officers from States, the Centre usually does so with the concurrence of the State government. That was not the case here. The Trinamool government predictably refused to release him and asked for the or-



der to be rescinded. When that did not happen, Mr. Bandyopadhyay resigned from his post. He was immediately appointed Chief Adviser to Ms. Banerjee.

While Mr. Bandyopadhyay's resignation may have temporarily stymied the Centre, it promptly responded by serving him a show-cause notice for violation of Section 51(b) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005. According to Section 51(b), anyone refusing to comply with the directions of the Central or State government or the National Executive Committee or State Executive Committee or District Authority can be jailed or fined or both. The show-cause notice was issued because Mr. Bandyopadhyay did not stay back for the meeting on Cyclone Yaas with Mr. Modi and left with Ms. Banerjee to oversee relief work. Mr. Bandyopadhyay responded to the notice saying he was merely following the orders given to him by the West Bengal Chief Minister. While several lawyers and bureaucrats believe that the Centre's position is untenable in a court of law, its actions once again highlight its intention to target an Opposition government at all costs.

Governor's role
While the recent controversies do not bode well for federalism or indeed democracy, it is the West

Bengal Governor's actions that have had the most corrosive impact. Ever since his appointment, Mr. Dhankhar has needed the State government in every possible manner. However, since the election result, he has, in the words of a political analyst, taken the place of the "political Opposition" in the State. While there is no denying that there has been post-poll violence in parts of Bengal, Mr. Dhankhar went overboard in describing the situation as "total lawlessness and anarchy". In a breach of protocol, he even visited violence-affected areas along with the BJP's elected representatives.

Though Mr. Dhankhar's actions might be in keeping – in intent though not in degree – with many contemporary and past governors, they once again raise questions about the role of a governor. During the long period of Congress dominance, the governor's position had largely been reduced to furthering the Centre's interest in the States. While the Congress did occasionally appoint eminent personalities and technocrats as governors, such as Gopal Krishna Gandhi in West Bengal, the position by and large was reserved for superannuated politicians and party loyalists. The latter practice has continued under the Modi government.

There was a heated debate in the Constituent Assembly in 1949 on the role of the governor. Members such as H.V. Kamath, K.T. Shah, Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri and Bishwanath Das were critical of the powers of the governor. They viewed the position as a relic of the colonial era, one that was "capable of creating mischief". Das, a Prime Minister of Orissa Province in colonial India and later Governor of Uttar Pradesh, was

one of the most vocal critics of the position. He had presciently noted that since the governor was appointed by the Centre, it was quite likely that he or she might not be acceptable in an Opposition-ruled State, especially if the "power to give administrative pin-pricks is vested in the governor".

B.R. Ambedkar attempted to address these misgivings by making a distinction between the "functions" and "duties" of a governor. He concluded that the governor was not a representative of a "party" but of the "people" of the State. There was arguably enough ambiguity in this formulation for a governor to be an activist and partisan, if he or she so desired. Ambedkar's faith in the Centre and governors seems misplaced since most governors, especially in recent times, have proved to be representatives of the party that appointed them and not impartial constitutional authorities. The very fact that governors are expected to resign when there is change of government at the Centre is proof of that. Indeed, the West Bengal Governor's actions illustrate the fears of the critics in the Constituent Assembly.

If the Centre continues with its methods of using Central agencies and the Governor to keep up the pressure on the West Bengal government, it might score political points in the short term. However, in the long run, this will weaken India's federalism and democracy. It also paradoxically hurts the BJP's prospects in a State where it needs to politically mobilise against a party with a big mandate and not resort to strong-arm tactics.

Ronojoy Sen is Senior Research Fellow, ISAS, National University of Singapore

The promise and perils of digital justice delivery

Phase 3 of the e-Courts project can harness technology for service delivery without increasing surveillance risks



TANMAY SINGH & KRISHNESH BAPAT

In popular perception, Indian courts are not associated first with the delivery of justice, but with long delays and difficulties for ordinary litigants. According to data released by the Supreme Court in the June 2020 newsletter of the e-Committee, 3.27 crore cases are pending before Indian courts, of which 85,000 have been pending for over 30 years. Can technology be used to revolutionise India's courts? Yes, but only when it operates within the constitutional framework of the fundamental rights of citizens. If not, technology will only further exclusion, inequity and surveillance.

The e-Courts project
The e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India recently released its draft vision document for Phase III of the e-Courts project. Phases I and II had dealt with digitisation of the judiciary, i.e., e-filing, tracking cases online, uploading judgments online, etc. Even though the job is not complete, particularly at the lower levels of the judiciary, the project can so far be termed a success. This has been particularly so during the COVID-19 pandemic, when physical courts were forced

to shut down. Despite some hiccups, the Supreme Court and High Courts have been able to function online. This was made possible by the e-Courts project, monitored by the e-Committee.

Phase III of the e-Courts project, however, has reached the stage in a trilogy where the franchise starts trying to do too much and goes off the tram line. On the surface, the objectives remain noble. There is commitment to the digitisation of court processes, and plans to upgrade the electronic infrastructure of the judiciary and enable access to lawyers and litigants.

However, the document goes on to propose an "ecosystem approach" to justice delivery. It suggests a "seamless exchange of information" between various branches of the State, such as between the judiciary, the police and the prison systems through the Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS). It has been pointed out by organisations such as the Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project that the ICJS will likely exacerbate existing class and caste inequalities that characterise the police and prison system. This is because the exercise of data creation happens at local police stations, which have historically contributed to the criminalisation of entire communities through colonial-era laws such as the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, by labelling such communities as "habitual offenders". This is of particular concern since the data collected,



shared and collated through the e-Courts project will be housed within the Home Ministry under the ICJS.

A cause for concern
Several individuals and organisations have warned against the zeal of the data collection exercises contemplated by the draft proposal. The "seamless exchange of information" relies on large-scale gathering and sharing of data. Data collection is by itself not an evil process. In fact, data can be a useful tool for solving complex problems. For example, to address the problem of cases pending simply for service of summons, Phase II of the e-Courts project saw the development of the National Service and Tracking of Electronic Processes, a software that enabled e-service of summons. It is only when data collection is combined with extensive data sharing and data storage that it becomes a cause for concern. The Supreme Court must take care not to violate the privacy standards that it set in *Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017), especially since India does not yet have a data protection regime.

Data can be useful when it provides anonymous, aggregated, and statistical information about issues without identifying the individuals. This could be made possible in Phase III by encouraging uniformity and standardisation of entry fields. Unfortunately, there has been a dangerous trend towards creating a 360-degree profile of each person by integrating all of their interactions with government agencies into a unified database. This approach has been perfected by social media platforms and technology companies, and the government is now trying to do the same. The difference is that when technology companies do this, we get targeted advertising, but if the government does it, we get targeted surveillance.

This 360-degree approach is the main objective of Phase III. Once any government department moves online, their pen-and-paper registers will become excel sheets, shareable with a single click. Localised data will become centralised. Holdovers from the analog age ought not to have an issue with this process, since it can lead to great advancements in problem-solving. However, it is the next stage which is a cause for concern even for the most vocal proponents of the digital age, which is integration with other agencies.

When integrating data from all the lower courts, the intersection lies at the higher judiciary, because those are the appellate authorities connecting all the lower courts. When integrating data of

the courts and police stations, the intersection lies with the individual citizen, since it is the citizen's interaction with these branches of the state that is being monitored. While it is understandable why the courts could reasonably benefit from access to police and prison records, courts deal with a variety of matters, some of which may be purely civil, commercial or personal in nature. No clear explanation has been offered for why the Home Ministry needs access to court data that may have absolutely no relation to criminal law. This process serves no purpose other than profiling and surveillance.

Role of technology
Since the Phase III vision document is a draft, there is still an opportunity to abandon the ecosystem approach. The objectives were to streamline judicial processes, reduce pendency, and help the litigants. To continue to do that within the framework of our fundamental rights, the e-Courts must move towards localisation of data, instead of centralisation. The e-Committee must prevent the "seamless exchange" of data between the branches of the state that ought to remain separate. Technology plays an important role in the project, but it cannot be an end in itself.

Tanmay Singh is an Associate Litigation Counsel and Krishnesh Bapat is a Centre for Communication Governance Digital Rights Fellow hosted at the Internet Freedom Foundation

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Speed up vaccination

The Prime Minister's decision to revert to centralised procurement of vaccines is a step in the right direction ("A necessary reversion", June 9). With experts warning us of a third COVID-19 wave, it is of paramount importance that we are more prepared and learn from the mistakes that led to the devastation caused by the second wave. More studies and research need to be done to understand the efficacy of various vaccines against the different variants. The rapid surge in mucormycosis cases and the acute shortage of the antifungal drug, Liposomal Amphotericin B, needs to

be dealt with on a war footing. To err on the side of caution should be the mantra to win over COVID-19.

BIJU C. MATHEW,
Thiruvananthapuram

The government's decision to cap the price of vaccines in private hospitals is welcome, but should be taken with a pinch of salt. Despite the government capping the prices of medicines to treat COVID-19 earlier, private hospitals indulged in profiteering to the extent that several families have gone broke. When demand for medicines outstrips supply, people are ready to shell out any price demanded by

hospitals to save their loved ones. The key to a successful inoculation drive lies not only in letter but in spirit. The government must roll out punitive measures against those who violate the rules.

DEEPAK SINGHAL,
Noida

Former U.S. President Donald Trump may not have taken COVID-19 seriously but by securing enough vaccines for the U.S. in time, he showed that he was an astute businessman. He knew that vaccine supplies would never be able to keep up with the rapidly rising demand. In India, the long delay in ordering vaccines

was most unfortunate, especially since we pride ourselves on being the pharmacy of the world. At least now the vaccination pace should pick up across the country. Only by vaccinating the entire population can we beat the virus ("Centre places fresh orders for 44 cr. COVID-19 vaccine doses", June 9).

R. NARAYANAN,
Navi Mumbai

Saying 'no' to Coronil
In stopping the distribution of Coronil kits, Nepal referred to the statements on Coronil made by the Indian Medical Association ("Nepal stops distribution of Patanjali's Coronil kits", June 9). In February, the

IMA had questioned the Union Health Minister for being present at Coronil's launch. It has repeatedly criticised Ramdev and posed questions to the government. Yet, the government has not denounced Patanjali. On the contrary, Coronil received the AYUSH Ministry's certification as 'supporting measure' for COVID-19 treatment. Our leaders must take a cue from our neighbours and put a stop to the menace of companies marketing such untested concoctions.

M.P. MURALIDHARAN,
Bengaluru

Orphaned by COVID-19
The Supreme Court

deserves praise for directing the States and UTs to ensure that there is no break in the education of children orphaned by COVID-19 ("Ensure no break in studies of children hit by pandemic", June 9). It is a painful reality that these children might be forced to discontinue their studies due to poverty, lack of familial care, depression, etc. The government must take all possible measures to ensure that these children don't drop out of school.

P.K. VARADARAJAN,
Chennai

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The murky space of 'social audio'

While apps like Clubhouse give a push to innovation, privacy and data rights remain out of focus



KAIF SIDDIQUI & SHIFA QURESHI



FILE PHOTO

Clubhouse, a new social networking app based around audio rooms, surpassed 2 million Android downloads across the world last month. The key feature of the app is the unique medium – audio – through which its users interact. This distinguishes it from well-established social media and messaging platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and YouTube, which employ text, images, video, or a combination of three. In Clubhouse, the concept of old-school text chat rooms is replaced with the immediacy of the human voice. The app neither has any separate texting features, nor the option to create elaborate online profiles, thus keeping the focus purely on audio-based interaction.

Besides choosing their interests, users can also join various 'clubs', which are groups of members that share a common interest. After joining, users may get alerts for rooms hosted by such clubs. Clubs can also be used to interact with other people with whom they might share similar interests. A person can even start a club of their own, or 'drop-in' into any room mentioned on the Home or Explore page, as a listener or a speaker during a discussion.

Regulation challenges

The very nature of the app raises a number of questions on privacy and security. Audio rooms are likely to throw up new challenges for data regulators, who are yet to find effective ways to regulate traditional social media platforms. Audio-based interactions are faster and in real time, mirroring real-life far closely than text-based interactions. Hence, traditional methods of content moderation may not work here. Further, on an app like Clubhouse, cyberbullying and trolling, driven by sexism, racism and communalism, can be even more damaging.

The app allows a person to join any room that their friends are a part of, which may allow anyone to 'stalk' a person as they move from room to

room; the app even sends notifications to their followers. The experience on Clubhouse, therefore, involves constant hyper-awareness about how every action is being broadcast to followers. This is in contrast to popular platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and others, which, for all their flaws, allow browsing in relative invisibility. This awareness, along with a fear of being judged, might limit people from exploring the app's content.

Concerns have been raised over how Clubhouse temporarily records the audio in a room while the room is live, "for purposes of investigating the incident", and deletes it when the room ends. However, with the lack of end-to-end encryption, the data is still potentially accessible. Furthermore, this recording is done without the consent of the user.

According to privacy expert Alexander Hanff, the platform's practices are violative of numerous provisions of Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), including rules on security, proportionality and necessity principles and confidentiality of communications (Article 5), rules related to consent for processing of personal data (Article 6), and provisions on data protection by design and by default (Article 25).

According to a report by the Stanford Internet Observatory, the backend infrastructure of Clubhouse is supplied by a Chinese start-up called Agora. The report also mentions a possibility of the Chinese government accessing raw audio, as well as other security flaws.

It is important to note that India still lacks a stringent data protection law, and thus, its users are far more susceptible to data breaches and privacy violations. Currently, the Cen-

tral government and WhatsApp are locked in a legal battle over the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, which require breaching encrypted channels to trace the originator of messages. The lack of end-to-end encryption in Clubhouse could thus make it an easy tool for government surveillance.

Clubhouse also seeks permission to access users' contacts, which is a significant privacy concern, as it gives the app information about people who might never even join it in the first place. If a user chooses not to share their contact list, they are not allowed to send invites to others. In turn, the contact list is shared not only with app developers but also with people in a user's contact list. There is no mechanism to control who can follow whom, which further affects privacy and contributes to the 'harassment' culture.

App permissions on smartphones have always raised questions of privacy. Even apps that are meant for limited purposes, such as sharing or managing files, or playing music or videos, often require permissions to access the phone's camera, contacts, or call history.

The big picture

The rise of Clubhouse cannot be studied in isolation. It is one of the several apps that have grown popular during the COVID-19 pandemic, as millions of people stuck in their homes look for new methods to communicate with each other. But its flaws aside, Clubhouse, with its promise of revolutionising social media and communication through audio rooms, represents an attempt to innovate and provide an alternative to traditional platforms.

In competition law terms, one way through which powerful firms like Facebook and Twitter can be challenged is by exploiting opportunities in spaces that are adjacent to the market where these firms reign supreme. This is what upstarts like Clubhouse are trying to do, as 'social audio' is one such adjacent market that has opened up only recently.

However, as has been observed over time, the Big Tech will strive to protect their dominant positions in one of two ways – either by simply acquiring the potential competitor, known as a 'killer acquisition', or by copying the unique features of their competitor apps and adding them to their own platforms.

The Big Tech giants already enjoy, thanks to their massive user base, access to more data and network effects (a phenomenon whereby a product or a service gains additional value as more people use it). Thus, they have often made clones or added features of newly popular apps to their already bloated platforms. When Snapchat introduced stories, mainstream platforms also came up with the feature a few years later. Similar trends were noticed when Zoom shot to fame and Google introduced Google Meet, or when TikTok became popular and Instagram launched 'reels'. With Clubhouse's growing popularity now, Twitter has introduced 'Spaces', and Facebook is working on a similar feature as well. But this time, LinkedIn, Discord, Reddit and Spotify have also joined the bandwagon. One wonders what this means for innovation in the world of tech. However, it remains to be seen whether such moves will affect Clubhouse, which was valued at \$4 billion as of April 2021.

For the average user, Clubhouse might seem like a great, lightweight app with an innovative premise. But it does not offer much in terms of privacy and data protection, and in that sense, it is not very different from traditional platforms. Apps like Signal are an exception in this regard. While the market of 'social audio' is likely to soon become a battleground, the medium won't truly progress until innovation is balanced with respect for privacy, security and data rights.

The authors are law students at the Faculty of Law, Aligarh Muslim University

South Asia's healthcare burden

Despite the debilitating pandemic, state investment in the health sector remains deeply inadequate



SYED MUNIR KHASRU

On May 18 this year, India recorded 4,529 deaths from COVID-19, the highest daily death toll recorded in the world after the United States in January saw 4,468 deaths. As India combats the pandemic, its neighbours are experiencing spillover from the menacing second wave. The virus has swept through Nepal, while Sri Lanka added as many as 78,218 cases in May. Pakistan crossed over 200 daily deaths in April, its highest since the pandemic started. The situation in Bangladesh is precarious, given the recent detection of the highly contagious Delta variant. Bhutan is the only exception, with only one death and 1,724 cases so far. The country's success stems from a well-funded and prepared public health system with stringent measures, responsible citizenship, and an accountable government.

As bodies piled up at overcrowded crematoriums in India in the last few months, several things were to blame – "super spreader" events, a fragile health infrastructure neglected for decades, citizens not following health protocols, and logistical mismanagement. What has exacerbated the situation is a subpar public healthcare system running on a meagre contribution of a little over 1% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While the private medical sector is booming, the public healthcare sector has been operating at a pitiful 0.08 doctors per 1,000 people, falling miserably below the World Health Organization's (WHO) prescribed standard of 1:1000. India has only half a bed available for every 1,000 people, which is a deficient figure even for normal days.

Bangladesh and Pakistan fare no better, with a bed to patient ratio of 0.8 and 0.6, respectively, and a doctor availability of less than one for every 1,000 people. While ideally, out-of-pocket expenditure should not surpass 15% to 20% of the total health expenditure, for India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, this figure stands at an appalling 62.67%, 73.87% and 56.24%, respectively.

The situation in rural India, where people largely rely on threadbare healthcare facilities, is disconcerting. Numerous distressing reports have emerged in the media, from patients being treated on the hospital floor for lack of beds, to some walking hundreds of miles just to get to a hospital, let alone one with oxygen or drug supplies, and many be-

ing left to resort to homemade concoctions and local quacks. Further, the fact that hundreds of healthcare workers have succumbed to COVID-19, unable to seek a bed in the very hospitals they serve, is telling.

While India has the world's third-largest military expenditure, its health budget is the fourth-lowest. In Pakistan, even amidst the pandemic, the defence budget was increased by 12% in the fiscal year 2020-21, to \$7.85 billion, while the spending on health remained around \$151 million. Not too far behind is Bangladesh, with decades of underfunding culminating in a crumbling public healthcare system, pushing people to opt for private medical care even if it means exorbitant health payments. Major public sector investments by the 'big three' of South Asia, i.e., India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, are towards infrastructure and defence, with health taking a backseat. A quick look at pre-pandemic sectoral allocations explains the chronically low status of human development indicators in the three countries.

Learning from Southeast Asia

South Asia can take lessons in pragmatic healthcare policy from Southeast Asia, which has prioritised investments in healthcare systems while broadening equitable access through universal health coverage schemes. From Vietnam's preventive measures focused on investments in disease surveillance and emergency response mechanisms, to even countries like Laos and Cambodia making a constant effort towards improving the healthcare ecosystem, all have done much better than their South Asian peers.

It took a debilitating global pandemic to push South Asian policymakers to direct special attention and resources towards strengthening the health systems. But is it too late? Though the Indian government in this year's budget highlighted an increase of 137% in "health and well-being" expenditure, a closer look reveals a mismatch between facts and figures. Learning from the devastation unleashed by the pandemic, South Asian countries must step up investment in their public healthcare sectors to make them sustainable, up to date and pro-poor; most importantly, the system should not turn its back on citizens. Given the high chances of another wave or even the impending crisis of climate change, stopgap measures ought to be replaced by a well-thought-out vision and political commitment for long-term healing.

The author is Chairman of The Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance (IPAG), an international think tank with presence in Dhaka, Delhi, Melbourne, Vienna and Dubai. Email: munir.khasru@ipag.org

A hospital's misplaced priorities

The notice by GB Pant Hospital to its staff against the use of Malayalam was in poor taste

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

A noted botanist of Indian origin working in the United States, Kamaljit Bawa, had expressed an important idea – that our identity is also determined by our geography. He had gone on to suggest that given the range of life forms found in India due to a variety of climatic zones, we should see biodiversity as part of our identity. As is only reasonable to expect, the botanist might have been motivated by the need to preserve his turf at any cost, but, at any rate, he has opened up scope for imagination. That we should think of the biodiversity of India as an aspect of our identity is not just perceptive but also a constructive suggestion, at a time when the ruling dispensation in India is hell-bent on beating the country into a homogenous mass professing Hindutva.



Before Hindutva was sprung upon us, there was a linguistic majoritarianism project highlighted by the concerted effort to impose the Hindi language on all of India. And it would be naive to believe that the duo of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, who are prone to addressing this linguistically diverse country in Hindi alone, are the sole champions of this project. The team of Arvind Kejriwal and his Cabinet colleagues, which runs the Delhi government, has now constituted itself into a suitable B-team.

Intolerant attitude

In a curious case, the GB Pant Hospital, which comes under the Delhi government, issued a notice on June 5: "A complaint has been received regarding Malayalam language being used for communication in working places in GIPMER. Whereas maximum patient and colleagues do not know this language and feel helpless causing a lot of inconvenience ... it is directed to all Nursing Personnel to use only Hindi and English for communication otherwise serious action will be taken." The notice was soon

revoked after it received a nationwide backlash.

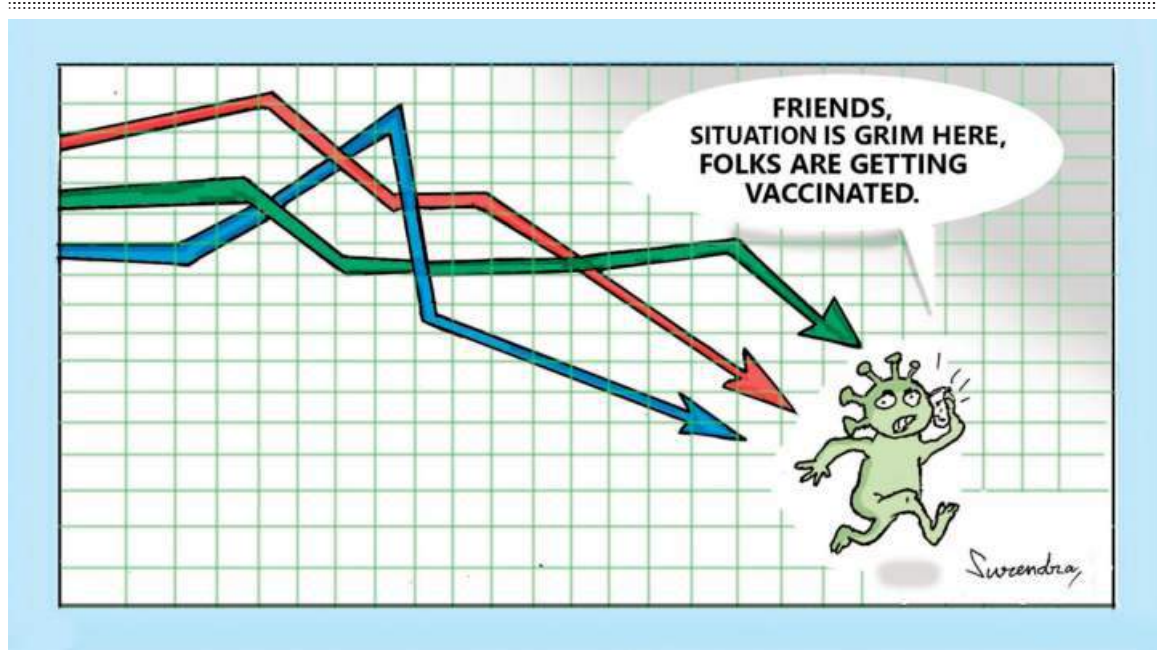
It is mind-boggling that language should be the Delhi government's first concern during a raging pandemic. The entire country watched, with sympathy, how Delhi struggled without the most basic health infrastructure during the violent second wave of infections. It could neither provide adequate oxygen supplies nor prevent the black-marketing of essential drugs. Instead of supporting frontline workers, which includes doctors, nurses and support staff, it chose to shower a section of them with cultural intolerance.

There is a saying in Malayalam that translates to: "Turning on your mother after losing in the bazaar." Its relevance in this context is direct. On March 31, Kerala, the home of the nurses of GB Pant Hospital, had a COVID-19 case fatality rate that was only a little more than a third of Delhi's, and a death rate that was less than one fourth by comparison (deaths per population). Perhaps the political leadership of the capital has something to learn.

Far from being non-compulsory, bedside manner is a necessary qualification for medical workers. It is not negotiable that they should treat their patients with empathy, and language is a part of this human exchange. But it is odd that Malayali-speaking nurses are somehow found deficient in this area in Delhi alone when they have been prized members of the health system in West Asia, Europe and North America for decades now.

Ultimately, it is a failure that Delhi finds itself at odds with a section of its health workers. It can surely learn from the treatment of migrant workers in Kerala. A publicly built housing complex for them in Palakkad is called "Apna Ghar" (our home). There is something hypocritical in accepting a person's labour but hating their language.

Pulapre Balakrishnan teaches economics at Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana



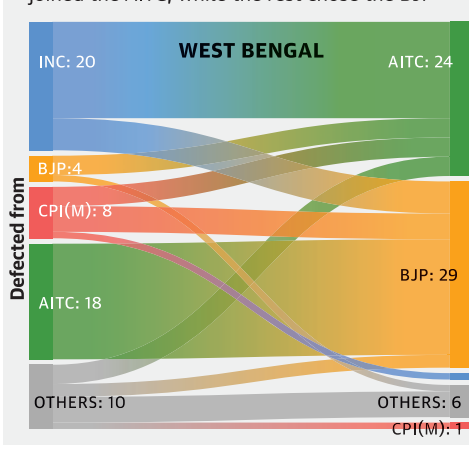
DATA POINT

Switching sides

As many as 111 candidates who contested polls again in the 2021 Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal, Assam and Puducherry, had defected from other parties, according to data from ADR*. West Bengal recorded most such defectors. The Congress lost the most candidates to defections, while BJP gained the most

State	Re-contesting MLAs	Re-contesting candidates
W.B.	35	25
T.N.	8	13
Puducherry	4	2
Assam	2	13
Kerala	2	7
Total	51	60

WEST BENGAL | Out of the 60 re-contesting candidates/MLAs who defected, 29 and 24 joined the BJP and Trinamool Congress (AITC), respectively. The Congress lost 20 candidates/MLAs, the most in the State. Among them, 15 joined the AITC, while the rest chose the BJP

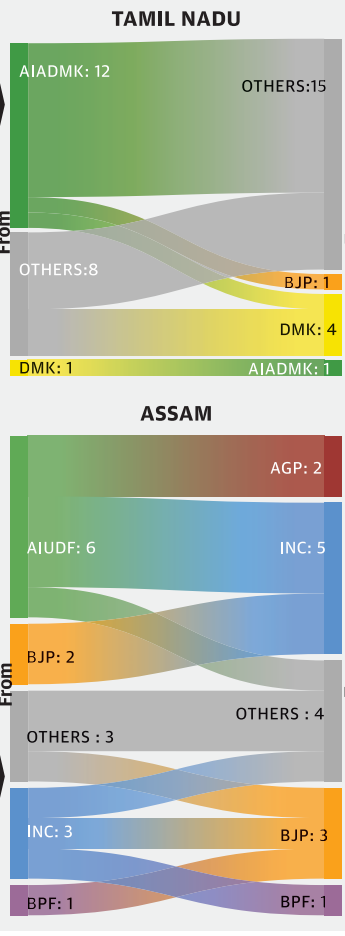


TAMIL NADU | In Tamil Nadu, AIADMK lost 12 re-contesting MLAs/candidates to defections, the highest among all parties. While one each joined the DMK and BJP from the AIADMK, 10 others went to other parties

PUDUCHERRY | Out of six re-contesting candidates/MLAs in Puducherry, five defected from the Congress. Among them, three joined the AINRC, while two jumped to the BJP. AIADMK also lost a candidate to defection

ASSAM | The State saw 15 defections, with AIUDF topping the list with six. The Congress gained five, while the BJP and the Asom Gana Parishad received three and two candidates/MLAs, respectively

*Association for Democratic Reforms



The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 10, 1971

A global, not a library, language (From an editorial)

While nine Vice-Chancellors of universities in the four southern States, meeting at Dharwar, have agreed that higher education should be given through the media of the regional languages and English, a group of members of Parliament are carrying on a campaign for the use of Hindi in all publications of the Government of India. The parliamentarians have suggested that the Central Information Bureau should supply information in Hindi about defence, science and technology, agriculture, education and industry.

The Central Government is, of course, anxious to introduce Hindi wherever possible and the new Defence Production Board, which is to control the ordnance factories, has been called the "Raksha Utpadan Board" ... The article we published yesterday on "Why the World learns English" shows that even in Europe, where local languages are highly advanced, English is the favoured foreign language. But the Government of India wants English to be treated as a "library language" for higher education despite the fact historical circumstance has made it familiar in the world of business and industry as well as in schools and colleges.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 10, 1921

Gandhi's response to Viceroy

[Bombay, June 9] Referring to H.E. the Viceroy's speech at the Chelmsford Club, Mr. Gandhi writing in "Young India" says:— His Excellency's speech has an air of unreality about it without intending to clothe it with any such air; on the contrary, there are in it evident traces, of his having laboured to deliver a true message to an expectant India, but the speech has failed in my humble opinion in doing so, because of many limitations that the office of the Viceroy carries with it. He could not for instance override the tradition of claiming infallibility for British rule. He laid it down as a proposition beyond the possibility of doubt, that here in India there can be no trace and must be no trace of racial inequality. There is no more unreal proposition to the ear of an Indian than this, because his experience belies it. Superiority of race as a passion has become almost a religion with the average Englishman, nor does he strive to conceal it from view. It obtrudes upon you in India as it does in the colonies.

-Associated Press of India

FROM PAGE ONE

Paddy MSP hiked less than 4% from last year

The hike in rates was proof of the Centre's commitment, the Agriculture Minister said.

On the protests, he said the Centre was always ready to hold talks, but the unions had not accepted the options presented to them for suspending the three laws.

"If they want to talk about any other option other than a repeal of these laws, we are ready to discuss and arrive at a solution," he told journalists earlier.

'Deliberate policy move' The Centre said the higher rate of returns being promised for urad, tur and oilseeds was a deliberate poli-

cy move. "The differential remuneration is aimed at encouraging crop diversification," an official statement said.

"Concerted efforts were made over the last few years to realign the MSPs in favour of oilseeds, pulses and coarse cereals to encourage farmers shift to larger area under these crops and adopt best technologies and farm practices, to correct demand - supply imbalance. The added focus on nutri-rich nutri-cereals is to incentivise its production in the areas where rice-wheat cannot be grown without long term adverse implications for groundwater table," it added.

Jitin Prasad leaves Congress to join BJP

Mr. Goyal specially mentioned Mr. Prasad's father, the late senior Congress leader Jitendra Prasad, as one who had rendered great service to the people of Uttar Pradesh. "I have been watching Jitin Prasad for many years, he lost his father when he was quite young, but he took on the mantle, and decided to serve Uttar Pradesh, winning two Lok Sabha elections in 2004 and 2009. He has been diligent in his push for development of his constituency, lobbying hard with the government since 2014 for a railway project in the area," he said.

Mr. Goyal, sources said, was instrumental in negotiations between Mr. Prasad and the BJP's top leadership before the induction.

Brahmin factor

Sources said Mr. Prasad's induction was a response to heavy feedback from the Uttar Pradesh unit of the BJP that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's reported close identification with the Rajput community was alienating Brahmins, who form at

least 12% of the vote in the State. "The community also punches above its weight in terms of societal influence," said a source in the BJP.

Mr. Prasad, who had formed a Brahmin Chetana Manch, with a patchy record of influence, is being seen as a part of the BJP national leadership's move to press the reset button on the Brahmin-Rajput equations, and settle the consolidation of upper caste votes in favour of the party.

It is also significant that the induction comes at a time when BJP and RSS leaders have been engaged in stocktaking exercises in Lucknow and the report submitted to party president J.P. Nadda on that exercise mentioned the resentment of Brahmin leaders in the party against Mr. Adityanath.

Mr. Prasad's entry into the party may unsettle some equations in the BJP, not just in the Adityanath camp but also those Brahmin leaders in the party who were jockeying for position as purveyors of the interests of the community.

Central deputation of officers very low: DoPT

"Many officers from Uttar Pradesh have applied but they are not getting a clearance," said the official.

As per norms, States have to depute All India Services (AIS) officers, including Indian Police Service (IPS) officers, to Central government offices and at any point it cannot be more than 40% of the total cadre strength.

In a letter to States on June 4, the DoPT has said "the number of nominations received so far has been very minimal and as such the representation of officers from various cadres/ services, especially at the deputy secretary/director level, is extremely low."

The DoPT had sent a similar communication in December 2020 but in the past two years it has not been able to fill vacancies at the director and joint secretary level in various Central ministries. Around 40% or 390 CSS posts are at the joint secretary level (more than 19 years experience) and 60% or 540 such posts are at the rank of deputy secretary (nine years) or director rank (14 years of service).

"... every cadre is allowed a deputation reserve to ensure that officers have the opportunity to work on deputation including that under the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS), which adds to their experience. The utilisation of this reserve is low and this underutilisation, particularly at the deputy secretary/director level, causes serious gaps in cadre management. This aspect will also be kept in view by the DoPT while considering cadre review proposals, to

be received in future. The cadres that have not been forwarding adequate nominations for the CSS at various levels may have to settle for less number of additional senior duty posts in future by way of corresponding reduction," the letter stated.

Age limit

The DoPT has stated that officers nominated for Central government posts should not be more than 54 years. "It is also requested to ensure that the officers who are on the verge of promotion, as may be relevant, during the year are not nominated, often necessitating their early repatriation to avail of promotion in the cadre. It may be ensured that the names of only those officers are forwarded who are likely to remain available under the Central Staffing Scheme for full tenure," it said.

Last year, to tide over the crisis, the DoPT changed norms and made it mandatory for IAS officers from 2007 batch onward to mandatorily serve for two years in Central deputation within first 16 years of their service if they wanted to be empaneled for a joint secretary rank in the future.

Before any officer of the AIS is called for deputation to the Centre, his or her concurrence is required. The Establishment Officer in the DoPT invites nominations from the State governments. Once the nomination is received, their eligibility is scrutinised by a panel and then an offer list is prepared, traditionally done with the State government on board.

Rajasthan objects to Asaram's plea

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Rajasthan government has objected to a bail plea in the Supreme Court filed by self-styled godman and convict Asaram Babu, saying he is trying to change the venue of his custody under the guise of medical treatment.

Asaram is serving life sentence in a sexual assault case.

He has approached the Supreme Court for bail on health grounds.

"The accused, with ulterior motive, has been attempting to change the venue of his custody under the guise of medical treatment. Such change is an abuse of the process of law," Rajasthan argued in its counter-affidavit.

Asaram was deliberately trying to delay a pending trial for rape in Gandhi Nagar and that "he is stable and fit", it stated.

In fact, the doctor's certificate, in one instance, was found to be even false, the Rajasthan government stated.

Telangana High Court to get 18 more judges

CJI has taken up with PM, Law Minister the pending request

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL NEW DELHI

The Telangana High Court will see one of the biggest hikes in judicial strength across the country in a long time after Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana took up with the Prime Minister and the Union Law Minister the High Court's two-year-long pending request for more judges to tackle an alarming increase in its case pendency.

The High Court will witness a 75% increase in its sanctioned Bench strength with immediate effect. This would take the number of judges in the High Court from 24 to 42. The High Court's request for more judges had been lying with the Centre since February 2019 even as its case backlog climbed to 2.37 lakh.

The proposal for a hike in the sanctioned Bench strength was first sent to the Union Law Minister by the then Chief Justice of the High



Court in 2019. Though the request was endorsed by the Chief Minister and the Governor, the Centre chose to keep it "in abeyance".

Assurance given

The issue had remained dormant until CJI Ramana, along with other concerns of the judiciary, took it up with the Prime Minister and the Law Minister soon after assuming office as top judge in April. They had both, in turn, agreed to "get the matters examined expeditiously". However, this assurance

did not stop the CJI from writing to the Law Minister on May 27 about the High Court's still unresolved request. Chief Justice Ramana observed that the High Court's request was reasonable and fully endorsed by the Telangana Chief Minister.

The High Court desperately needed more judges for faster delivery of justice. The request has been pending for over two years. The CJI also affirmed that the necessary infrastructure was already in place to accommodate 42 judges.

The Law Ministry responded this time by swinging into action, concurring with the CJI to enhance the sanctioned Bench strength in the High Court.

The Ministry conveyed its decision to the CJI on June 7. The CJI has given his requisite final approval to the proposed hike on June 8. The path is clear for the Ministry to notify the hike.

Govt. officials targeted in phishing attempt

They received malicious web links

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Several government offices, including Defence Ministry officials, were on Wednesday targeted by a malicious web link sent on WhatsApp and SMS, asking them to update their vaccination status.

The message asked officials to click on www.covid19india.in to generate a digital certificate of COVID-19 inoculation.

The SMS, signed with an abbreviation "MoHFW", that expands to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said, "as per directives of MoHFW, Confirm your COVID status on https://covid19india.in and generate your vaccination certificate".

An official said that when he clicked on the link, it directed to a page "gogov.in" that resembled the government website mygov.in, and asked to key in the official e-mail and password

An e-mail received by a Defence Ministry official said that as part of an aware-



The messages asked officials to update their vaccination status. • GETTY IMAGES

ness drive regarding "post vaccination measures to be followed by armed forces" a questionnaire was required to be filled and a Google drive link was shared. Some officials even received phone calls where the caller said he was calling from an Army Hospital and the official need to update the vaccination status on a link being sent on WhatsApp.

The officials were sensitised to not click on the link as it appeared to be a phishing attempt to access their official e-mails and correspondence. A considerable part of government offices are still working from home owing to COVID-19 restrictions.

Anup Chandra Pandey takes charge as EC

He has served as U.P. Chief Secretary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Retired IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey on Wednesday took charge as Election Commissioner, the Election Commission of India (ECI) said in a statement.

Mr. Pandey, a 1984 batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, joins Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sushil Chandra and Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar to complete the three-member commission. He retired as Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh in 2019.

"Under his administrative leadership as Chief Secretary, the State successfully organised the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj and Parvasi Bhartiya at Varnasi Diwas in 2019," the statement read.

Interest in writing

Mr. Pandey had served in the Defence and Labour and Employment Ministries. "Mr. Pandey has a keen in-



Anup Chandra Pandey

terest in writing and has authored a book titled *Governance in Ancient India*, which explores the evolution, nature, scope, functions and all related aspects of ancient Indian Civil Service from the Rig Veda period to 650 AD," the ECI said.

Mr. Pandey was appointed by the President on Tuesday, filling the vacancy that was created after Mr. Chandra was elevated to the post of CEC upon the completion of then CEC Sunil Arora's term in April.

Punjab gangsters killed in encounter in Kolkata

A policeman suffered bullet injuries in the operation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

Two alleged gangsters from Punjab were killed in an encounter with the Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal police in the New Town area of Kolkata on Wednesday afternoon.

Officials of the STF said a policeman suffered bullet injuries in the operation and had been hospitalised.

"Jaypal (Bhullar) and Jaspreet (Singh) had killed two ASIs [Assistant Sub-Inspectors] in Ludhiana, Punjab, on May 15. There was a cash reward on them," Additional Director-General of Police, STF, Vineet Kumar Goyal, told presspersons.

The police said the two gangsters had been hiding in the city for the past few days.

The encounter took place in a posh housing complex in New Town in the north-



The housing complex in New Town of Kolkata, where an encounter took place on Wednesday. • SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

eastern fringes of the city around 3.30 pm, creating panic among the residents. Several rounds were fired during the encounter.

Police officers said that when they knocked the doors of flat no. 201 on the second floor of Tower B of the residential complex,

they were fired at from inside.

Five sophisticated pistols, 89 rounds of live ammunitions and ₹7 lakh in cash were recovered from the flat, Mr. Goyal said.

Mr. Goyal said a team of the Punjab Police had reached Kolkata.

Choksi's plea adjourned

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Dominica High Court has adjourned the hearing on Mehul Choksi's bail application to June 11, local media has reported.

The fugitive businessman's bail plea was earlier rejected by the magistrate concerned, following which he approached the High Court there.

My marriage is invalid: MP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

Trinamool Congress MP Nushrat Jahan on Wednesday issued a statement describing her marriage with Kolkata-based businessman Nikhil Jain as "invalid" while Mr Jain said it was a "subjudice matter". She said the wedding was conducted in Turkey and had not been validated under the Special Marriage Act in India.

Heavy rain affects life in Mumbai

Met Department announces onset of southwest monsoon in Maharashtra

STAFF REPORTER MUMBAI

Rains lashed Mumbai on Wednesday leading to water logging and disruptions in suburban local train services, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) announced the onset of the southwest monsoon in Maharashtra.

As predicted by the IMD last week, heavy to very heavy rainfall began in all parts of Mumbai. The Regional Meteorological centre has predicted similar weather for the next five days in the coastal part of Maharashtra.

According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Mumbai received 181.01 mm rainfall in 12 hours from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday. According to the data, the city area



Monsoon woes: People wading through a flooded road in Sion, Mumbai, on Wednesday. • EMMANUEL YOGINI

received 137.82 mm rainfall while western and eastern suburbs received 190.78 mm and 214.44 mm rainfall respectively. A total of six instances of wall collapse were reported but no injuries were reported.

Central Railway suspended its suburban local train

traffic on the main line of CSTM to Thane at 9.55 a.m. on Wednesday due to inundation in Kurla and other areas. Similarly, train traffic was suspended on the CSTM-Mankhurd harbour line after the water level rose above four inches due to high rainfall and high tide.

Webinar to explore medical education trends

It will include a Q&A session with speakers

STAFF REPORTER CHENNAI

A webinar on the 'Impact of the Pandemic on Medical Education' will be held on June 12 at 11 a.m. as part of the SRM Virtual Conclave for Career Guidance 2021 webinar series.



the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), in association with *The Hindu* Group, spotlights science, engineering, technology, law, humanities, medical health sciences and

agriculture courses and their relevance to the 2020s workplace.

Dr. Ravikumar Arunachalam, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Medical and Health Sciences, SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST); Dr. Bhuvaneshwar, Director, PSG Superspeciality Hospitals, Coimbatore, and Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Chairman, Department of Orthopaedics and Spine Surgery, Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore, are

the panellists speaking at the webinar.

The discussion will be moderated by Ramya Kannan, Chief of Bureau, Tamil Nadu, *The Hindu*. It will conclude with a Q&A session with the speakers.

Register for the free webinar at http://bit.ly/SRMTHE14 or scan the QR Code.



Ladakh jobs reservation decision unclear: CPI(M)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR

CPI(M) leader M.Y. Tarigami on Wednesday described the Ladakh administration's move to reserve all jobs for locals as "another half-hearted and unclear attempt by the BJP government".

"The government didn't even bother to consult two functional hill development councils in the region before taking the decision. There is

no clarity in the latest order whether those applying for jobs will have to submit permanent residence certificates or domicile certificate," Mr. Tarigami said.

He said unlike Ladakh, the recruitment rules framed for J&K last year allowed all domiciles, even those living in J&K for more than seven years or studying in the UT up to class 12, as eligible to apply for jobs.

The Indian in the army of Stamford Bridge

PRIYADARSHINI PAITANDY

Vinay Menon had never really watched a football match – live or on television – till he found himself at the Stamford Bridge stadium in 2009, watching Chelsea play.

He did not need tickets: Because this 46-year-old from India is the football team's wellness consultant. Now, during season, he spends his days training with the team, and watching their multiple matches.

"Cherai to Chelsea" is how he likes to describe his story.

Incidentally, that is also the name of the biography his wife, Flomy Menon, wrote, which was published last year.

"Cherai is a small village near Kochi in Kerala. Whenever I go back, I sit by the door, drink *chai* and look at the backwaters. That feeling of being home is wonderful," says Vinay over a call from London.



Among Chelsea's UEFA Champions League-winning squad is Vinay Menon, the team's wellness coach from Cherai in Kerala

rah Group, when he received an offer to join Roman Abramovich, owner of the Chelsea football team, as his personal coach in London. Eventually, Vinay took on his new role with the team, also known as The Blues.

The journey to Chelsea

Though Vinay wanted to be a police officer, when he completed his Bachelor's, he did not find an opening in the police force. So, he went on to pursue a Master's in Philosophy in Physical Education at the Pondicherry University. "I also began training street children in physical education for free," he adds.

Following that he did a course in Yoga Science from Kaivalyadhan Yoga Institute in Pune, before working as a senior wellness practitioner at Ananda in the Himalayas. There, not only did he discover the world of luxury wellness, he also met the most important person in his life: his wife.

"They moved to Dubai next. I started something called full moon yo-

Cup of joy Captain of the Chelsea team Cesar Azpilicueta with Vinay Menon. CHELSEA FC VIA GETTY IMAGES

ga. I often felt like Madonna. I would be dressed in a white *kurta*, standing on a stage at the five star resort and instructing my clients," he laughs.

His current lifestyle in London is not something Vinay had ever planned or imagined. "My cousins worked in Mumbai or abroad and when they visited Cherai they spoke in English. I only spoke in Malayalam," he says. But he always wanted to do something that brought recognition to his village, his State. "I always tried to walk a different path."

In his current role, Vinay is often a sounding board for Chelsea players. As he is "not a fan", he can detach and critically evaluate the footballers, no matter how big a star they are. But back in Kerala, he is plain old Vinu (as he is fondly called), who walks around in *chappals*. "It is important to detach, especially for mental wellbeing," says Vinay. This is his advice for the team. "If you want to perform at the peak, you have to have equilibrium."

It would then be fair to credit him for playing his part in Chelsea's recent win at UEFA Champions League, where he admits he was overwhelmed. "I created ARFA. It stands for Awareness. Recovery. Focus. Achievement. I use this process to train players," he says.

He adds that fun is important to achieve best results. "If you are not enjoying something, you cannot be an elite performer."



Dorje spills the tea

An ambitious new project attempts to deliver Darjeeling's tea, celebrating all its quirks and flavours, to your doorstep through the year

SHONALI MUTHALALY

Despite the thunder, lightning and patchy phone connection, Sparsh Agarwal is undeterred. He bounces around his home at the Selim Hill tea estate in Darjeeling, recently renamed "Second Chance" by his mother, in search of a better phone signal each time this interview is stalled by the storm.

It is this cheery resilience that could give Darjeeling's celebrated, but now struggling, tea estates a second chance to shine. But first, an experiment, which begins with an annual subscription plan that launches tomorrow, needs to go according to plan.

"When Darjeeling tea is the pride of India, why are most of the 87 estates barely breaking even, some on the brink of collapse?" asks Sparsh, adding that the romance of this "champagne of teas" has drawn buyers from across the world, for two centuries.

Over the past decade, however, a declining export market, climate change and now the pandemic are threatening the survival of many of the estates, which in turn threatens all that is special about Darjeeling.

"The Selim Hill tea garden has been under my family's stewardship for four generations, since 1871. Half of it is under forest cover, home to everything from hornbills to elephants," says Sparsh. "We do not want to sell because we need to protect this ecology. But we need to find a way to support the estate."

After a year of field re-

search, Sparsh, who was working with the Centre for Policy Research, and his business partner Ishaan Kanoria, an investment banker, decided to quit their jobs and launch Dorje Tea, an innovative and sustainable model that re-introduces Darjeeling tea, embracing all its quirks, to an Indian audience, instead of exporting it piecemeal.

Their mentor is the legendary Rajah Banerjee, whose family ran Makaibari tea estate for four generations before he recently moved on. A trailblazer, he created an organic oasis at Makaibari, inspiring other estates to follow suit, Rajah is a powerful influence in Darjeeling, and an ambassador for its tea.

Seasonal moods Grown with a Chinese cultivar, Darjeeling tea captivated international buyers with its potent

aroma and unique muscatel flavour, a pleasing sweetness with musky, spiced undertones.

"However it never focussed on the domestic market and is seen as unaffordable," says Sparsh, explaining why: "There are four seasonal flushes. While the first and second, which are spring and summer, are sold at premium, there isn't a market for monsoon and autumn flush teas – though each has a unique taste, aroma and liquoring, which is additionally influenced by terroir."

Popular in Europe, America and Britain particularly, the spring and summer flush get exported at heady prices, while the monsoon and autumn flush are undervalued.

Since the best tea is exported, and profits ride on sales of just the spring and summer flushes, often estates barely break

even, says Sparsh. "The flush system is unique to Darjeeling and adds to the romance of our teas. Customers should be having all four. The biggest mistake is thinking there is a hierarchy."

There is another catch. "International clients want the whole leaf grade, so the tea is machine sorted. For one kilo of tea, only 30% is whole leaf, which means that the rest sells at a loss," says Sparsh. "But, in the inconsistencies lie the charm of the product."

Stating that he is fundamentally against the export market, which buys relatively small quantities, and "destroys the harvest for rest of the year," Sparsh says Dorje will be reaching out to Indian buyers with a subscription plan.

"For an annual subscription of ₹2,100 per kg, we will send tea from each flush to customers through the year."

Since all flushes will be equally celebrated, without being wastefully broken up and graded, pricing is competitive, enabling customers to drink this champagne of teas everyday.

Sparsh and his family are launching the Selim Hill Collective, helmed by Rajah Banerjee, to focus on the non-commercial rejuvenation of the tea garden, starting with a reforestation campaign.

"Even as we work on getting the commercial part right, we want to focus on community welfare and wild life conservation," says Sparsh, adding, "Within this crisis, there is opportunity."

To order log on to dorjeteas.com



From the hills (Above) Sparsh Agarwal and Ishaan Kanoria at work. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT, GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

DJ Martin Garrix shares the euphoria that surrounds the EURO 2020 anthem

SB VIJAYA MARY

'We Are The People', the official song of UEFA EURO 2020 is set to kick off on June 11 in Rome. When the football anthem was launched on DJ Martin Garrix' 25th birthday on May 4, 2021, by Sony Music Netherlands, the collaboration with U2 greats, Bono and The Edge, was one of the big surprises for fans.

In an email interview, Garrix reveals that as the tournament was pushed back due to the pandemic, they had to keep the secret for nearly two years. "Just being in the studio with them has been a surreal experience. Bono has such an iconic voice; I had goosebumps during the whole session. I love that they were so open-minded and involved in the creative process of the song," he says.

The EDM virtuoso rose to fame with the electronic theme titled 'Animals' in 2013, at the age of 17. Garrix has collaborated with Usher, Dua Lipa, Bebe Rexha, Troye Sivan and Khaled. Still, composing for an event like the EURO Championship

is a special honour, he says. "My first response when UEFA reached out was disbelief, then when things were confirmed, it turned into being very nervous, but also excited and grateful that they put their trust in me."

The past year has been creatively challenging. "It was weird for me to make festival music without live shows. Normally this is the music I test at festivals, get the response, go straight back to the studio with the adrenaline and excitement from the show, polish it, and test it again."

"When we get back, the first shows will be absolutely insane. I think they're going to be such an explosion of adrenaline, excitement, love, euphoria. It's going to be really, really beautiful."

To his count DJ Martin Garrix
UEFA VIA GETTY IMAGES



At the top of his game

Back to school at 70



In Manipur's Chatric village that overlooks the India-Myanmar border, a new school sees many elders learning the alphabet for the first time

SWETA AKUNDI

"My name is Hangmila Jamang and I am 70... I am 79 years old," narrates Hangmila Jamang with the cadence of a kindergartener, as she looks up from drawing water pots on her sketchpad. It is Art class today at Oasis Academy in Chatric Khullen in Kamjong district of Manipur.

Even as children across India spend their time on online classes, for the elders of this village of 100-house-

holds, lockdown has meant a return to physical schools after decades.

Leading this project is Sorinthan Haorei, founder of Gemson Haorei, an organisation named after his father. In February this year, the 28-year-old founded Oasis Academy for children up to Class VII, and in May, opened it up to 15 adult learners as well.

His grandmother, Shoknaola Hungyo (70), is one of his students. They are learning numerals from one to



My grandson, my teacher Sorinthan Haorei in class with the village elders; (left) at a children's camp. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

1,000, alphabets, and how to write their own names. For many of the elders, the upcoming exam will be the first one of their lives.

"Most of the elders here did not receive basic education when they were young. The highest one of them had studied up to was Class IV," says Sorinthan. But education was not the only reason this school was set up: "They (the elders) are involved in agricultural activities and most live away from their families. So another reason we took this up was to provide a platform for socialisation, to keep their mental health up in times like these," he adds.

In October 2020 that Sorinthan shifted base to his native village from Delhi where he got his Masters in Public Administration at IGNOU. "We returned due to the pandemic. On speaking

to other people here, we realised that so many other children too had returned and were unable to go back to towns and cities to study. Which is why my mother and I came up with the idea of starting a school in the vil-

Sorinthan Haorei founded Oasis Academy for children and later opened it up to adults

lage itself," he says. He turned his parents' ancestral home into a school for children, and set their curriculum according to the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur. In 2019, he organised the first district-level literary meet in Kanjong,

hosting a quiz, debate and spelling bee. The teachers at his school are not 'trained', he confesses – it is just him and his mother. But the organisation is looking for sponsors to employ teachers, or teachers from neighbouring towns to volunteer.

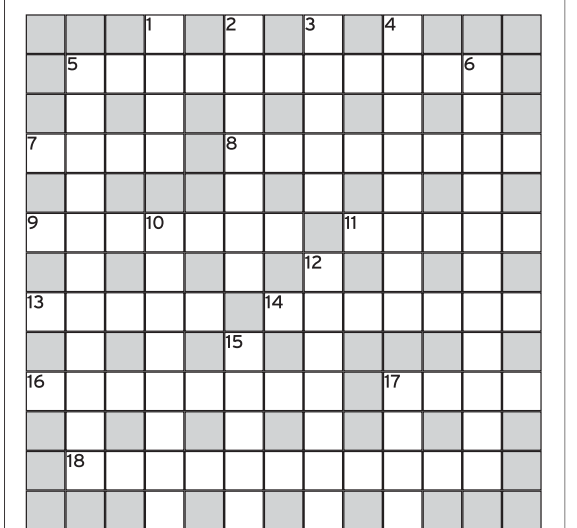
For the elders, he and the other villagers together constructed bamboo sheds outside the main building. "We teach them to read the hymns at church. In due course, they will also be able to write letters to their sons and daughters."

Sorinthan moved out of his hometown in Ukhrul, when he was 16, in pursuit of higher education. However, every Christmas and New Year, it was a family tradition to visit his grandmother in Chatric Khullen.

"We had to take a day bus from Ukhrul which dropped us off 40 kilometres from Chatric. So the next day, we would travel by foot, and reach the village around 4-5 pm," he says. He recalls crossing a shabby bridge made of rope and chopped bamboo. "When I was young, elders would carry me on their backs, because the path was slippery."

He is now back at the same village, teaching his grandmother English. "My grandmother is a good teacher," says Shoknaola. "Once I am able to sign my name, collecting my late husband's pension at the bank will become easier," she adds.

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD-13416

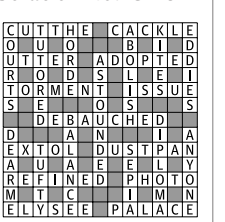


- Across
- 5 Unsympathetic treatment (5,6)
- 7 Kick on the shins (4)
- 8 In shreds (8)
- 9 Arrogant and presumptuous person (7)
- 11 Finch with pain (5)
- 13 Young horse (5)
- 14 Patient's resting place (7)
- 16 Headlong rush (8)
- 17 Bad-mannered person (4)
- 18 Today's name for the Hellespont (11)
- Down
- 1 Irish county – stopper (4)
- 2 High level of respect (7)
- 3 Loincloth worn by Indians (5)
- 4 Type of humorous verse (8)
- 5 Showing keen intelligence (5-6)
- 6 Disloyal (11)
- 10 Meet Karl (anag) – skiing turn (8)
- 12 Drunk (3-4)
- 15 Exclude – bread (anag) (5)
- 17 Great size (4)

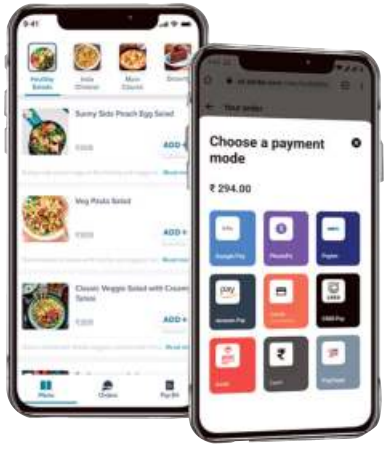


The solution will appear on June 17, 2021.

Solution No. 13415



Much ado about your lunch
(Clockwise from below) DotPe on phone screens; a Mumbai dabbawala at an Impresario restaurant; pizza to go; a dabbawala on the road • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT AND GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK



The (delivery) road not taken

The food delivery space is India's latest battleground. As new options like Thrive and DotPe go head to head with giants, customers get more spoil for choice

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR, SHILPA NAIR ANAND AND PRABALIKA M BORAH

"Where a consumer has a presence, a restaurant can follow. Facebook, Instagram, Google listings, WhatsApp... any of them can be worked into an ordering platform, and we are teaching restaurants how to do just that," says tech entrepreneur Anurag Gupta. His non-aggregator platform DotPe, co-founded with Shailaz Nag and Gyanesh Sharma, has tied up with over 15,000 restaurants in 300 cities, in two years.

This business is miniscule compared to giants like Swiggy and Zomato – Zomato boasted of 1.4 million active restaurants back in 2019, the year DotPe had just started out. But even as the giants continue to innovate, creating employment and providing essential delivery during lockdown, alternative food delivery platforms have been seeing a steady rise over the past two years.

The commission conundrum

Interestingly enough, they arrived on the scene to fill an urgent need, not of consumers, but of restaurants. Restaurateurs (as well as organisations like National Restaurants Authority of India, NRAI) have for years been seeking alternatives to mainstream aggregator apps. Statements galore have been made about how the deep discounts offered by delivery apps, combined with heavy commissions they charge, cut deep into profits of restaurants, bars and cafes, to the point of making business nearly unsustainable.

While NRAI announced plans to launch its own delivery platform back in 2020, it was in May 2021 that Kerala Hotel and Restaurant Association (KHRA) launched a food delivery app, Rezozy, as a response against the commission charged by larger food aggregators.

"It is around 20% plus GST, which comes up to 21.5% or 22% of the bill amount. When you factor in the overheads, which include raw material cost and salaries, a restaurant owner is not left with much to run the business. Sometimes the bill amount [on a particular order] may not justify the commission. We needed to do something about it in order to continue in the business," says Asees Moosa, Ernakulam district president of KHRA.

Platforms like DotPe and Thrive, in contrast, charge anywhere between 1%

to 3% commission per order, and have capped it at that. Thrive has been another popular option for individual restaurants in metro cities. Launched in October 2020 with one restaurant partner in Mumbai, Thrive built its base to 1,500 restaurants by February 2021.

"That is when we launched our 2.0 version, which has helped double our count in the last two months alone. We now have over 3,000 restaurants on board," says co-founder Dhruv Dewan.

Dhruv does not see Thrive as an alternative to Swiggy or Zomato. "I think in

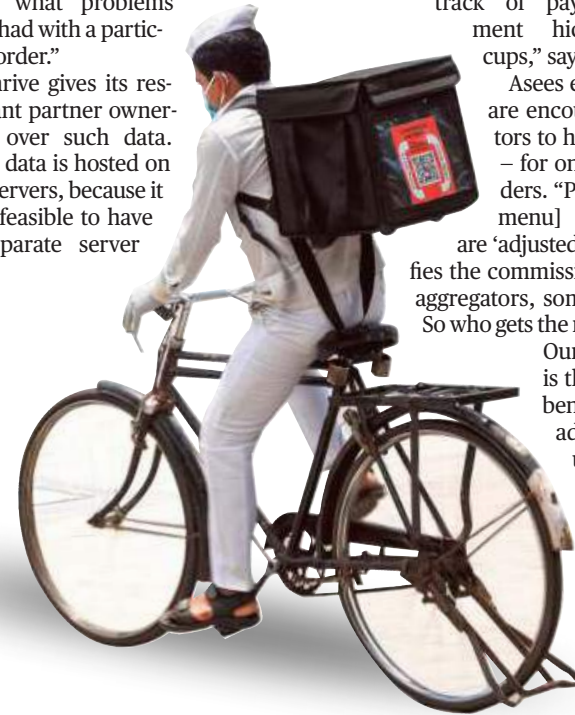
the near future, direct-to-customer platforms and aggregators will coexist," he says, "But for anyone building a business from scratch, a direct-to-customer option makes more sense than an aggregator."

A key reason why certain restaurants choose Thrive over Zomato or Swiggy, is access to consumer data. As Gauri Devindyal of The Table, Mumbai puts it, "It is very difficult to run a business online if you don't know who your consumer is, which dish they prefer and why, what problems they had with a particular order."

Thrive gives its restaurant partner ownership over such data. "The data is hosted on our servers, because it isn't feasible to have a separate server

for each restaurant. But the data rests contractually with each restaurant, and they have full access to it. According to the terms and conditions, we [Thrive] can't give a restaurant's consumption data to anyone else. We can only use it to improve our operations, like keeping track of payment hiccups," says Dhruv.

Asees explains how hotels are encouraged by aggregators to have different prices – for online and offline orders. "Prices [on the online menu] and portion sizes are 'adjusted' in a way that justifies the commission they pay to the aggregators, some make extra too. So who gets the raw deal in the end? Our aim [with Rezozy] is that all stakeholders benefit, not just us," he adds. The menu uploaded by the restaurant on Rezozy has to be the one displayed at the hotel. If there is malpractice then action is taken against the hotel – they are removed if they



refuse to comply. "This is a reason why a few hotels are not keen on being on the app as they are used to the extra profit," says Asees.

Last-mile delivery is another factor where today's giants appear to have an advantage; a restaurant needs a dependable delivery fleet, one that knows its city's lanes and bylanes, shortcuts and detours.

DotPe and Thrive address this with a hybrid model. As Anurag points out, "The last-mile delivery problem has already been solved by others – by Shadowfax, Rapido and Dunzo. We have tied up with them; restaurants have the option of using their own staff for delivery, these third-party teams, or a mix of the two." Thrive's model is similar.

Riyaaz Amlani's Impresario Handmade restaurants – the firm behind Social – recently snagged a headline-grabbing tie-up: Mumbai's dabbawalas now deliver his restaurants orders to homes across the metropolis.

Learning curve

Innovating is one thing, getting smaller and newer restaurants to understand the nitty-gritties of online operations in the midst of a pandemic is another.

NRAI has been conducting bootcamps to familiarise restaurants with DotPe's system in multiple cities.

In Mumbai, the gastropub London Taxi co-founded by Dhaval Udeshi and NRAI member Pawan Shahri, has doubled up as an incubator programme.

Dhaval says, "This is the first time that a restaurant is opening up its kitchen to become an incubator for home delivery. There is no doubt about the adverse effect of the pandemic on India's F&B segment, especially small business owners. Newer companies who want to start their own brand in the food business need SEO (search engine optimisation) to acquire direct customers. To make a business survive on its own it takes a good couple of months."

Dhaval says that partnering with known brands is one definite way forward, keeping in mind the importance of SEO in reaching end-customers online. "We have redone our entire marketing strategy towards online delivery, and have partnered with DotPe for the same," he says.

It appears to be a case of multiple Davids banding against a few Goliaths, in a tussle that promises to be fascinating, and ultimately rewarding for customers.

Getting real with Chinmayi

The singer talks about her recent, impromptu concerts on Twitter Spaces and how that has altered people's perception of her as a full-time activist

SRINIVASA RAMANUJAM

"People who have not met me think that I am an angry woman," says Chinmayi, in a telephonic interview. "Twitter Spaces changed that perception and it was therapeutic for me personally; it reset what I felt about myself. Spaces also helped put some focus on my art because I thought: Have people forgotten that I am a singer?"

If you drop by Chinmayi's residence in Chennai, you will probably see her playing with her dogs and humming a tune. It might be a raga or *alaap*, or a tune from one of her superhits.

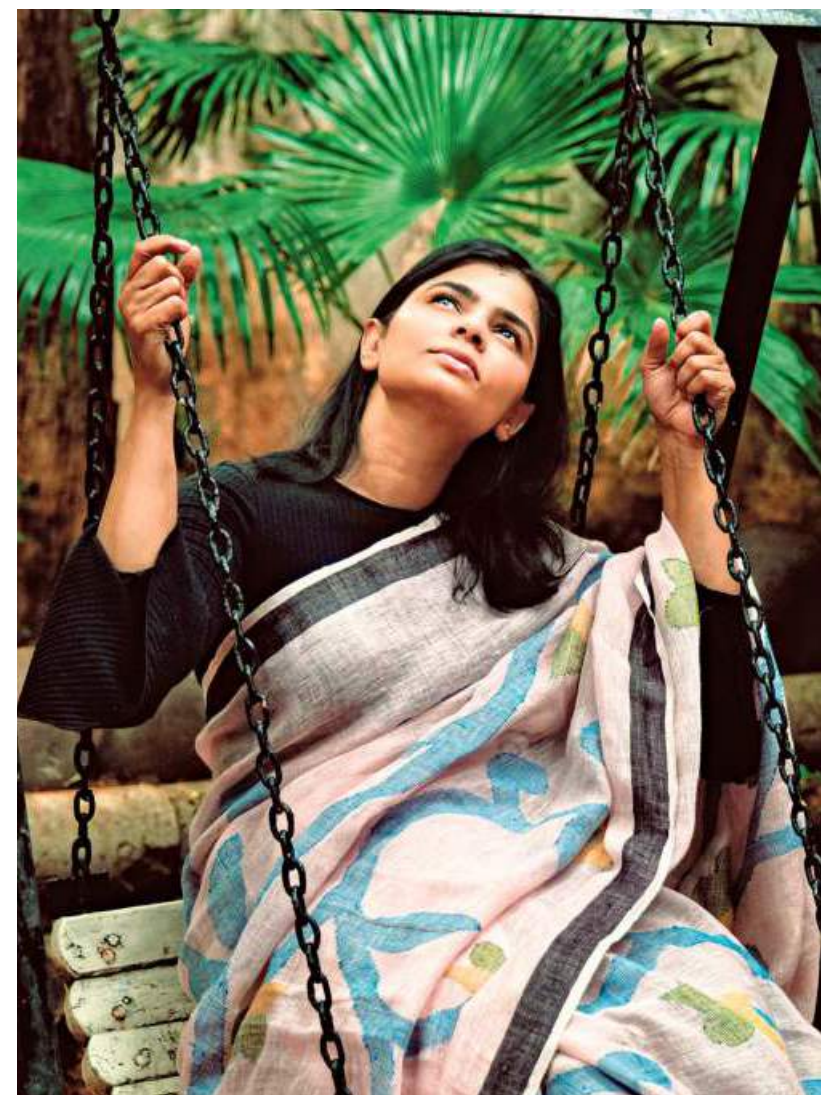
It is this side of the singer that fans have lately been introduced to in her recent packed, Twitter Spaces outings, one of which spilled over to the wee hours of the following day. However, the ones that won the most hearts were her concert with composer Govind Vasantha and her rendition of '80s hits, a tribute to Ilaiyaraaja who turned 78 recently.

In some of her Spaces, Chinmayi showcased her vocal prowess, thus leading to comments among Twitterati, many of whom said the music "healed them in tough times". She also takes on impromptu requests, to the delight of her fans. "I had a great time performing," she says.

Also trending on social media in recent times was the hashtag #WeWantChinmayiBack, indicating that listeners wanted to hear more of her in films.

"That was absolutely touching, but how much of this will have a change in ground reality is to be seen," says the singer, who mentions that Govind Vasantha and Nivas Prasanna are among her closest friends in the music industry.

Chinmayi, however, is not much of a music listener herself. "I don't listen to music for relaxation or fun. For me, music is an all-consuming exercise; I cannot relax when it plays in the background. That's why when I drive, I do not have music playing," says the musician, whose playback singing career kickstarted with the hit 'Oru Deivam' song in Mani Ratnam's *Kannathil*



Changing tracks Singer Chinmayi • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Muthamittal (2002). Since then, she has sung over 1,000 songs in various languages.

She states that her film offers have dried up since her involvement with the #MeToo movement, which began in 2018, but there are still a few tracks on the cards.

"I sang a solo Malayalam song for AR Rahman for the Prithviraj project (*Adujeevitham*) four years ago. I am not sure of its status now. I have sung a few upcoming tracks in Telugu, Kan-

nada and Malayalam but nothing in Tamil."

So, what's next? At the moment, Chinmayi is making sure she is heard on social media. She has been a part of two Clubhouse events discussing cinema. Also on the cards is a Twitter Spaces dedicated exclusively to *ghazals*, which she is planning to schedule in the next few days.

"I speak about issues that need to be flagged, but people think I am into full-time activism," she says, discussing the surge of support from listeners on Twitter Spaces. She adds, "These recent conversations helped change that notion."

For me, music is an all-consuming exercise. I cannot relax when it plays

Fighting the good fight

Japanese filmmaker Kazuo Hara discusses his 15-year project, *Minamata Mandala*, and how it is reflective of the times we live in

SRIVATSAN S

An isolated elderly patient with the Minamata disease lying on a hospital bed with ventilator support, is the opening scene of *Minamata Mandala* (2020). A sprawling six-hour-long documentary by acclaimed Japanese filmmaker Kazuo Hara, it is both a humane story and a deeply political film, that exposes the Japanese government's incompetence in handling the epidemic and painstakingly captures the decades-long legal and medical battle of the residents of Minamata, Kumamoto Prefecture in Japan.

Having filmed the documentary across a span of 15 years, Hara says the idea originated in his mind sometime during the early '90s when the momentum around Minamata died down.

The epidemic had forced an exodus among residents of Minamata to other cities in search of jobs. He came across one such: a fisherman, who moved to Osaka where they were discussing the impact the disease had on his life. There was an-



ger among people and agitations led by Civil Action Groups, one of the representatives being a university professor, also an acquaintance of Hara.

He suggested that the filmmaker make a documentary on Minamata; Hara says he postponed agreeing to it for a year, for he felt the subject was not his territory.

Connecting over a video call from his residence at Shinjuku, Japan, Hara, joined by a translator, says, "Noriaki Tsuchimoto's documentary had a profound impact on

me and he was already following up on the case. I even tried meeting him, but they wouldn't let me because he was in a hospital. I never had a chance to ask him, but in a way, I inherited what he started."

The filming for the documentary began in 2001 and roughly ended in 2015-16. Split into three parts with two intervals, Hara takes a matter-of-fact approach to the 372-minute documentary, bringing out a series of first-person interviews with patients, medical researchers and academics who were involved in the study, and the plaintiffs.

Though its runtime may seem laboriously endless, the larger point of the documentary was to give the audience a taste of the long road it takes for justice and hence, the film's runtime, though justifiable, seemed like it was intended to honour the memories of the people featured. Hara has not just invested a stupendous amount of time, but has also sacrificed 15 years of his life to realise this documentary.

While admitting that he has changed as a person over the years, Hara says it has been a journey of self-discovery going as far back as the time he made *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* (1987), one of his most famous works, to draw a parallel to his older self. The protagonist of that film was a determined individual who took on the government single-handedly.

"I realise now it is not about an individual but about the fighting spirit of the everyday people."

Minamata Mandala was screened at the recently-concluded International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021.

MARKET WATCH

	09-06-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	51,942	-0.64
US Dollar	72.97	-0.11
Gold	48,424	-1.45
Brent oil	72.48	1.27

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	852.60	-21.60
Asian Paints	2943.55	17.30
Axis Bank	736.75	-9.60
Bajaj Auto	4224.50	-45.40
Bajaj Finserv	11558.85	-174.25
Bajaj Finance	5674.50	-80.90
Bharti Airtel	540.00	-6.80
BPCL	485.05	-2.40
Britannia Ind.	3574.70	-27.05
Cipla	958.65	4.90
Coal India	156.40	0.40
Divis Lab	4267.45	26.25
Dr Reddys Lab	5222.80	-51.95
Eicher Motors	2729.05	-34.75
Grasim Ind.	1492.05	-11.10
HCL Tech.	971.30	4.10
HDFC	2544.75	-9.75
HDFC Bank	1480.30	-2.75
HDFC Life	684.90	-4.80
Hero MotoCorp	3023.50	-32.45
Hindalco	383.15	-4.60
Hind Unilever	2356.00	-3.00
ICICI Bank	636.10	-6.30
IndusInd Bank	1003.55	-16.60
Infosys	1415.30	2.35
IndianOilCorp	114.95	-1.75
ITC	212.50	-1.15
JSW Steel	697.85	-9.65
Kotak Bank	1782.90	-10.65
L&T	1519.30	-29.85
M&M	804.45	-3.40
Maruti Suzuki	7239.00	-97.75
Nestle India Ltd.	17557.15	74.55
NTPC	118.10	1.90
ONGC	124.05	-0.75
PowerGrid Corp	242.10	8.05
Reliance Ind.	2175.00	-39.60
SBI Life	998.60	18.75
State Bank	421.45	-5.75
Shree Cement	28407.35	-548.00
Sun Pharma	672.85	-5.90
Tata Consumer		
Products Ltd.	702.85	-7.60
Tata Motors	343.35	-9.40
Tata Steel	1101.00	-10.10
TCS	3200.25	0.10
Tech Mahindra	1052.25	-5.50
Titan	1730.75	18.25
UltraTech Cement	6724.75	-69.65
UPL	845.55	-8.00
Wipro	544.20	-6.40

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on June 09

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	72.78	73.10
Euro	88.72	89.11
British Pound	103.14	103.63
Japanese Yen (100)	66.49	66.78
Chinese Yuan	11.39	11.45
Swiss Franc	81.23	81.59
Singapore Dollar	54.98	55.22
Canadian Dollar	60.23	60.50
Malaysian Ringgit	17.67	17.75

Source: Indian Bank



LIC Chairman Kumar gets nine-month extension

NEW DELHI The government has given a nine-month extension to LIC Chairman M.R. Kumar in view of the insurer's proposed initial public offer towards the end of the current fiscal. The government has approved the proposal of the Department of Financial Services for extending the term of Mr. Kumar from June 30 till March 13, 2022, when he completes three years, sources said. PTI

Uber to hire almost 250 engineers in India

BENGALURU Uber on Wednesday said it would hire almost 250 engineers to expand its technology and product teams based in Bengaluru and Hyderabad. With this, the ride-hailing firm would have 1,000 employees in India by end of this year. The new hiring is expected to strengthen rider and driver growth, delivery, eats, digital payments, risk and compliance, the firm said.

'PC emerges as most preferred gaming device'

BENGALURU Personal Computer (PC) gaming is now a mainstream activity in India - especially during the pandemic - with women, school students, 'GenZ' youth from Tier 2 seriously considering it as a career option, as per Gaming Landscape Report 2021 released by HP India. Some 1,500 respondents took part in the survey conducted in 25 metros and Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities across India.

DGTR task force to cut compliance burden

NEW DELHI A task force for reducing the compliance burden for citizens and business has been constituted by the Commerce Department, as per the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR). The terms of reference include reviewing all existing rules; processes and procedures; ensuring that these are kept simple and ensuring that all processes are fully online. PTI

U.P. favours GST reduction on essentials for COVID-19 care

Govt. wants to minimise burden of the people coping with pandemic: Khanna

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh government is in favour of reducing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) levied on COVID-19 essentials to minimise costs borne by people to cope with the pandemic, State Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna said.

The GST Council, that met on May 28, had formed a Ministerial group to review demands for slashing the tax rates or exempting COVID-19 supplies from GST. Mr. Khanna was part of the Group of Ministers (GoM) that submitted its report to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman this week.

"The U.P. Government is



First step: A group of Ministers has submitted a report to Ms. Sitharaman on exempting COVID supplies from GST. *REUTERS

in favour of reducing taxes in order to reduce the COVID-19 treatment costs for patients," he said.

He was responding to a query on the possibility of levying a 0.1% GST on COVID-19 material ranging from

that need to be done, (they) will be done'. However, no date has been set for the Council to study the report.

Mr. Khanna also asserted the State had not raised taxes on petroleum products despite the fiscal difficulties posed by the pandemic. On States' GST compensation dues, he said U.P. had no pending dues since last year.

While the Centre has announced a ₹1.58-lakh crore borrowing plan to meet States' GST compensation dues this year, rating agency ICRA has estimated that ₹97,700 crore of States' dues remain pending since last year and have to be paid this year, for which the funding options are unclear.

Govt. extends Jain's term at RBI by 2 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Wednesday said the government has extended the tenure of Deputy Governor Mahesh Kumar Jain for two years.

"The Central Government has re-appointed Shri Mahesh Kumar Jain as Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India for a period of two years with effect from June 22, 2021, or until further orders, whichever is earlier, upon completion of his existing term on June 21, 2021," the central bank said in a statement.

Mr. Jain was appointed as deputy governor for three years in June 2018.

Before joining the Reserve Bank of India, he was managing director of IDBI Bank.

Aim to vaccinate 70 cr. by Sept., run sites 24/7: FinMin

'Herd immunity to boost recovery'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has made a strong pitch to vaccinate 70 crore people with at least the first dose by September to achieve herd immunity against COVID-19 and regain the momentum of economic recovery.

As this would require 93 lakh doses to be delivered every day from now, the ministry has suggested making vaccination a 24/7 activity, particularly in August and September when vaccine supplies may improve.

"As on date, 19.2 crore have got the first dose while 4.7 crore have been fully vaccinated. If 70 crore must be vaccinated by September, it is estimated about 113 crore doses are needed."

The ministry suggested aligning supplies with the September target and a system whereby 'people already having antibodies (are) vaccinated later while people who have not been exposed (are) given priority'.

"Use of technology to ease the administration of the vaccine, increased shifts at vaccination centres and integration of mass vaccination sites like shopping areas, drive-ins, with schools and primary health care centres will enhance faster coverage under vaccination," suggested the ministry in its monthly economic report for May issued by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA).

"The peak daily vaccination rate attained till date is 42.65 lakh. This peak was achieved using one shift of 8-9 hours of vaccination," it pointed out, suggesting an



enhancement of this to two shifts or even 24 hour-vaccination sites.

"Challenges pertaining to vaccine supply, vaccine hesitancy, operational aspects to achieve high daily throughput and widespread reach must be anticipated and planned for in advance," said the ministry.

"As we cautiously recuperate from the second wave, rapid vaccination and front-loading of the fiscal measures planned in the Union Budget hold key to invigorating the investment, and thereby, consumption cycle in the coming quarters."

Monsoon hopes

A healthy monsoon bodes well for agriculture and softer lockdowns by States are expected to translate into a 'softer economic shock' for sectors such as manufacturing and construction. The ministry stressed that 'quickening the pace and coverage of vaccination' was critical to help India heal and regain the momentum of economic recovery.

The second wave's spread to rural India had been rapid, but the share of rural districts in new cases was still lower than the levels seen at the first wave's peak, it said.

China factory price surge signals global pressures

Producer price index rises 9%

REUTERS BEIJING

China's factory-gate prices rose at their fastest annual pace in over 12 years in May, driven by surging commodity prices, highlighting global inflation pressures at a time when policymakers are trying to revitalise COVID-19 hit growth.

Investors are increasingly worried that pandemic-driven stimulus measures could supercharge global inflation and force central banks to tighten policy, curbing the recovery.

China's producer price index (PPI) increased 9%, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said, as prices bounced back from last year's pandemic lows. The



PPI rise was driven by significant price increases in crude oil, iron ore and non-ferrous metals, it said.

"The worry is PPI may hover at an elevated level for an extended period of time, creating economic headaches if mid- or downstream firms fail to absorb higher costs," said Nie Wen, chief economist at the Hwabao Trust.

Videocon rises 4.9% on NCLT nod for Vedanta firm's offer

Mining group's stake in Ravva oilfield to rise to 47.5%

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI

Shares of Videocon Industries Ltd. (VIL) jumped by the maximum permissible 4.9% to ₹6.43 on the BSE on Wednesday, a day after the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved the ₹2,962 crore bid by Vedanta Group company Twin Star Technologies Ltd. to acquire bankrupt VIL and 12 other group entities.

Vedanta's Vulcan Investments told the LSE the group's interest in the Ravva oilfield would rise to 47.5% post acquisition.

"The bid for the Videocon asset consists of an upfront

payment of almost \$40 million," Vulcan said in the filing. "The remaining deferred payments shall begin post completion of 2 years from the acquisition date."

According to previous submissions made before the NCLT, all the financial creditors of VIL and 12 group companies had lodged claims of ₹34,370.75 crore. Besides lenders for the group's oil and gas business had made claims of ₹23,120.90 crore with the Resolution Professional.

With the oil and gas vendors' claim amounting to about 40.2% of the total claims of the financial creditors of VIL, banks had a col-

Equity mutual funds saw ₹10,000-cr. inflow in May

Debt MFs' outflow stood at ₹44,512 cr.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Equity mutual funds witnessed a net inflow of more than ₹10,000 crore in May, making it the third consecutive monthly infusion.

This was way higher than ₹3,437 crore net inflow seen in April and ₹9,115 crore in March, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India showed.

Prior to this, equity schemes had consistently witnessed outflows for eight straight months from July 2020 to February 2021.

On the other hand, investors pulled out ₹44,512 crore from debt mutual funds last month after infusing over ₹1 lakh crore in April.

Overall, the mutual fund industry witnessed an outflow of ₹38,602 crore across all segments during the period under review, com-

Mutual fund industry witnessed an outflow of ₹38,602 crore across all segments

pared with an inflow of ₹29,906 crore in April. As per the data, inflow from equity and equity-linked open-ended schemes stood at ₹10,083 crore in May.

Barring equity linked saving schemes (ELSS), which saw a withdrawal of ₹290 crore, all equity schemes have seen inflow last month.

Further, gold exchange traded funds (ETFs) witnessed a net inflow of ₹288 crore last month, compared with ₹680 crore in April.

The assets under management of the industry rose to an all-time high of ₹33 lakh crore in May from ₹32.38 lakh crore in April.

Advent exits Crompton, sells 54% stake

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Private equity firm Advent International Corp. on Wednesday divested its entire 5.36% stake in Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals for a little over ₹1,348 crore through several open market transactions. The shares were lapped up by more than a dozen entities, including foreign investors, domestic mutual funds and insurance companies.

According to block deal data available with the BSE, Advent International Corp's Amalfiaco Ltd. sold a 3,36,67,802 shares, amounting to a 5.36% stake of Crompton. The shares were offloaded on an average price of ₹400.4 apiece. Prior to this, Amalfiaco had divested 3.8 crore shares of Crompton for over ₹1,492 crore in February 2021.

Non-life insurers get health boost

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD

Non-life insurers have registered a 11.35% rise in gross direct premium underwritten for May, a growth boosted by the continued demand for health products.

Flash figures issued by insurance regulator IRDAI show the non-life segment comprising general, standalone health as well as two specialised PSU insurers' gross direct premium underwritten at ₹12,316.50 crore. In May 2020, it was ₹11,061 crore.

Of this, general insurers, who also deal in health, posted a 7.2% rise to ₹10,823.33 crore. Standalone private health insurers stood out posting a 66.6% rise to ₹1,407 crore.

Cabinet approves 5 MHz spectrum for Railways

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the allotment of 5 MHz spectrum in the premium 700 MHz band to the Railways for captive use in areas of public safety and security services.

With this spectrum, the Railways will introduce Long-Term Evolution (LTE)-based Mobile Train Radio Communication (MTRC) on its routes. This will help prevent train accidents and reduce delays by enabling real-time interaction between the Loco Pilot, Station Master and the Control Centre. The project, targeted to be completed in five years, is estimated to cost over ₹25,000 crore.

"LTE... will be used for modern signalling and train protection systems and ensure seamless communication between loco pilots and guards," an official statement said. This will also enable the Railways to take up Internet of Things (IoT)-based remote monitoring, particularly of coaches, wagons and locos, and monitor live feeds of CCTV cameras in the coaches.



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Sakkari stops 2020 champ Swiatek's streak

Krejkikova ends Gauff's campaign; Nadal stumbles before powering into the semifinals

ROLAND-GARROS
ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS
Maria Sakkari ended defending champion Iga Swiatek's 11-match and 22-set winning streaks at Roland-Garros on Wednesday and reached the semifinals of a Major tournament for the first time.
The 17th-seeded Sakkari used strong and steady baseline play to eliminate Swiatek 6-4, 6-4 at Court Philippe Chatrier in the quarterfinals and ensure that the clay-court tournament will end with a new Grand Slam champion.
All four women remaining in the field are making their Slam semifinal debuts. This is only the second time in the professional era that's been the case at any major tournament, according to the WTA; there also was a quartet of first-time semifinalists at the 1978 Australian Open.
On Thursday, Sakkari plays unseeded Barbora Krejkikova, and No. 31 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova faces unseeded Tamara Zidasek. Krejkikova advanced earlier on Wednesday by beating 17-year-old Coco Gauff 7-6(6), 6-3.
Sakkari, who is from Greece, and Krejkikova, who

THE HIGHLIGHTS

1 This is the first time in the Open Era that there are four first-time semifinalists in women's singles at Roland Garros

5 The number of set points Gauff failed to convert in the first set against Krejkikova

36 Number of consecutive sets Nadal won in Paris before Schwartzman broke the streak. Previous best: 37 completed sets, a run also broken by Schwartzman (2018, quarterfinal)

105 Nadal's wins at Roland Garros, the most by a male player at a single Slam. Next best: Federer's 102 at Aus Open and 101 at Wimbledon

THURSDAY'S PICKS WOMEN'S SEMIFINALS

31-Pavlyuchenkova vs Zidasek
Krejkikova vs 17-Sakkari

Of course, we still have a long way to go, but we took a huge step today
SAKKARI after knocking out defending champion Swiatek

She's 17 years old. When I was 17, I was playing ITFs, 15ks. She's amazing. Her time will come
KREJKIKOVA on Gauff

is from the Czech Republic, are both 25. Each has won only one Tour-level title. Neither had been past the fourth round at a Major until now.
In the day's first quarterfinal, Gauff led 3-0 at the outset, then 5-3, and held a total of five set points in the open-

er, but failed to convert any. Krejkikova grabbed that set by taking the last four points of the tiebreaker and reeled off 15 consecutive points during one stretch en route to a 5-0 edge in the second set.
Closing out the most important victory of her singles career was not easy, though.

Krejkikova needed six match points to do it, raising her arms overhead when she finally won when Gauff sent a forehand wide.
Krejkikova has won two Grand Slam doubles titles with Katerina Siniakova – and they're into the semifinals in Paris – but is playing

THE RESULTS

Quarterfinals: Men: 3-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt 10-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0.
Women: Barbora Krejkikova (Cze) bt 24-Coco Gauff (USA) 7-6(6), 6-3; 17-Maria Sakkari (Gre) bt 8-Iga Swiatek (Pol) 6-4, 6-4.
On Tuesday:
Men: 6-Alexander Zverev (Ger) bt Alejandro Davidovich Fokina (Esp) 6-4, 6-1, 6-1; 5-Stefanos Tsitsipas (Gre) bt 2-Daniil Medvedev (Rus) 6-3, 7-6(3), 7-5.

in only her fifth Major tournament in singles.
"Everybody, they just put a label on me like, 'Yeah, you play doubles. You are a doubles specialist.' But I never thought I just wanted to be a doubles specialist," Krejkikova said.
"So I was just working hard all the time. I just wanted to play singles," she said.
In the men's section, Rafael Nadal dropped a set for the first time this year at Roland-Garros but ultimately advanced to the semifinals for a record-extending 14th time. The 13-time champion faced a stiff challenge from gritty 10th-seeded Diego Schwartzman before prevailing 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Medvedev exits with underarm serve and a dig at scheduling

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS
Daniil Medvedev's campaign at Roland-Garros came to an end on Tuesday with an ill-judged underarm serve on match point followed by an impassioned outburst over his eagerly-awaited showdown with Stefanos Tsitsipas being played inside an empty stadium.
The colourful World No. 2 was beaten 6-3, 7-6(3), 7-5 by the Greek fifth seed.
It was only Tsitsipas's second win over Medvedev in eight meetings and it ended in bizarre fashion.
The mercurial Russian decided to serve underarm on match point down.
But as he approached the net, hoping to finish the point with a volley, Tsitsipas merely fired a backhand winner beyond him.
"I was thinking about this during the whole match, like that maybe in the important point I could do it because my opinion was that he was quite far back in the court, so that can always work," explained the 25-year-old.
"I didn't see the opportunity before but I thought it's going to be a good choice to bring him surprise. I sometimes do it on practice. "Usually guys are a bit sur-



Frustrating night: Medvedev found the going tough during his quarterfinal against Tsitsipas. •REUTERS

prised. But it didn't work out at all. I won't say it was a mistake. It was something that I dared to do and maybe next time I won't do it knowing that he's ready."
Tsitsipas had his own description for the play which backfired so badly for his opponent.
"A very millennial shot," said the Greek.
"I saw he kind of stopped. I felt like there was something coming up, so at that point I think I got prepared for it."
Medvedev had never won a match at Roland-Garros in four attempts before this year.

So winning four matches in one visit was progress even if he was dismayed that his match was selected for the penultimate evening session.
It was played inside an empty Court Philippe Chatrier as spectators were banned under a 9 p.m. COVID-19 curfew.
This year's French Open is staging evening sessions for the first time under a broadcast agreement with streaming giant Amazon.
"It was without a doubt the match of the day but Roland-Garros preferred Amazon to people," said Medvedev.

QUICK SINGLES

Robinson should get a second chance: Holding
LONDON
West Indies great Michael Holding said he supported the suspension of Ollie Robinson for racist tweets, but also felt that the pacer should get a second chance if investigation proved that he did not repeat his actions beyond that time. **PTI**

Morgan and Buttler under investigation for alleged racist remarks
LONDON
England's white-ball skipper Eoin Morgan and wicketkeeper-batsman Jos Buttler are under investigation by the ECB after their alleged racist tweets, mocking Indians, surfaced on the social media. The posts, in which Buttler and Morgan used the word 'sir' to mock the Indians, started doing the rounds on social media after the ECB suspended pacer Ollie Robinson for some of his offensive tweets dating back to 2012-13. **PTI**

How Gavaskar, Pataudi and Srikanth helped Sehwag

'Take guard on middle- and off-stump' was their advice

AMOL KARHADKAR
MUMBAI
Former India batsman Virender Sehwag, on Wednesday, revealed how tips from former India captains Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, Sunil Gavaskar and K. Srikanth enabled him to overcome a lack of footwork as an opener.
Sehwag, who scored more than 8,000 runs in 104 Tests, revealed that near-identical suggestions by the trio early on in his international career were instrumental in him modifying his guard in Test cricket.
Lack of footwork
"When I came into international cricket, lack of footwork was lamented by many commentators and experts but no one advised a solution. Everyone would just say that you need to improve your feet-movement," Sehwag said while launching Cricuru, a cricket learning app that he has co-founded along with former India batting coach Sanjay Bangar.
"The only exceptions were Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, Sunil Gavaskar and K. Srikanth. They told me moving the feet wasn't paramount in cricket, what's important is you play the ball close to your body and below your eyes.
"Especially Pataudi and Gavaskar told me that if you



Defying copybook: Virender Sehwag simply relied on his remarkable hand-eye coordination. •FILE PHOTO

are away from the ball, then it matters whether you move your feet or not. They offered the best advice I received so far: to take guard on middle- and off-stump rather than leg-stump so that you can be closer to the ball even if you don't move your feet too much."
Mastering the skills
Sehwag said along with Bangar and the 33 cricketers – men and women across the globe – that they have got on board for paid coaching modules and interactions with budding cricketers, the app may help players and coaches master the skills and mental aspects of succeeding on the field.
Little late
"Had I got this advice earlier in life, I may have played much better cricket and scored more runs.
"Through Cricuru, you'll get many more such critical tips by veteran cricketers about how to make these minor adjustments."

Soaking it in



In good spirits: Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Cheteshwar Pujara enjoy the sunshine in Southampton. •TWITTER@IMVKKOHLI

Emily Arlott receives maiden call-up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BRISTOL
Pacer Emily Arlott, who took a hat-trick in the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, earned a maiden call-up to the England women's squad for the one-off Test against India starting here on June 16.
England has announced a 17-member squad.
The squad:
Heather Knight (Capt.), Emily Arlott, Tammy Beaumont, Katherine Brunt, Kate Cross, Freya Davies, Sophie Dunkley, Sophie Ecclestone, Georgia Elwiss, Tash Farrant, Sarah Glenn, Amy Jones, Nat Sciver, Anya Shrubsole, Mady Villiers, Fran Wilson, and Lauren Winfield-Hill.

Williamson out with elbow problem

NZ IN ENG

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BIRMINGHAM
New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson has been ruled out of the second and final Test against England at Edgbaston with a left elbow problem on Wednesday. Tom Latham will captain the side.
However, the Blackcaps are confident he will be fit to lead the team in the inaugural World Test Championship final against India starting on June 18.



Kane Williamson. •AFP

To rest key bowlers
Meanwhile, New Zealand is set to rest a few of its key bowlers for the Test to ensure that the team is fresh and raring to go when it clashes with India in the World Test Championship final from June 18.
With pacer Trent Boult now available for selection for the final match of the series, New Zealand can easily rest one of its other key bowlers – Tim Southee, Neil Wagner and Kyle Jamieson.
Williamson, who captained New Zealand in last week's drawn first Test against England at Lord's,

has been managing the injury since first missing matches in March.
"It's not an easy decision for Kane to have to miss a Test, but we think it's the right one," New Zealand coach Gary Stead said.
The teams:
England (likely XI): Rory Burns, Dom Sibley, Zak Crawley, Joe Root (Capt.), Ollie Pope, Dan Lawrence, James Bracey (wk), Craig Overton, Jack Leach, Stuart Broad, and James Anderson.
New Zealand (from): Tom Latham (Capt.), Devon Conway, Will Young, Ross Taylor, Henry Nicholls, B-J. Watling (wk), Colin de Grandhomme, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Ajaz Patel, Rachin Ravindra and Trent Boult.

South Africans in Kiwi colours

Conway the latest sensation after Wagner and Watling

S. DINAKAR
CHENNAI
The backswing was straight, the head still, the footwork precise, and the timing exquisite.
Confidence, not nerves, was on view on his Test debut as technique – he was so sure about his off-stump – tangied with temperament.
The astonishing debut of the Johannesburg-born left-handed opener Devon Conway was a reminder of the South African presence in New Zealand cricket.
His first innings 200 on a fresh Lord's pitch showed it was never too late, even at 29, to make a beginning; he moved to New Zealand in 2017.
Prolific
In New Zealand, Conway had been prolific across formats in the season gone by. The rest is history.
If Conway is serene, the very physical Neil Wagner is a hustler, with his short-pitched bowling. And the left-armed can get the ball to straighten from over-the-wicket.
The Pretoria-born Wagner impressed in South Africa at the junior level but he too,



Two of a kind: Success is another common thread in Conway and Wagner's careers. •REUTERS

forced by circumstances, shifted to New Zealand.
And how this never-say-die paceman has risen in stature! He has a whopping 222 wickets in 52 Tests, mixing his short-pitched stuff with movement and reverse swing.
At 35, he endures pain and injuries, gives it his all.
As feisty as Wagner, the Durban-born B-J. Watling left South Africa as a schoolboy for New Zealand. A tenacious top-order batsman, he developed into a competent wicket-keeper.
The combative Watling cemented his place as a wicketkeeper and a middle-order batsman who relishes crisis situations.
As many as 3,789 runs at

37.89 in 74 Tests and 262 catches plus eight stumpings showcase this 35-year-old battler's contribution.
No chokers
And the South Africans who turn out for New Zealand do not choke. Take the case of Johannesburg-born Grant Elliott whose sensational 84 not out took the Kiwis to a come-from-behind last gasp victory in the ICC ODI World Cup semifinal against South Africa in Auckland, 2015.
Heavy hitter Colin Munro, a South African by birth, has met with some success for New Zealand in white-ball cricket.
These South Africans have been busy in New Zealand.

Windies ready to pounce on unsettled South Africa

The visitors lost heavily in Pakistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GROS ISLET (ST. LUCIA)
West Indies believes it has its best chance in 30 years to defeat an unsettled South Africa as the two-Test series begins at the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground on Thursday. Kraigg Brathwaite's men are unbeaten in their last four Tests – a 2-0 triumph in Bangladesh and drawn matches at home against Sri Lanka.
West Indies goes into the campaign ranked just above a Proteas team reeling from successive heavy defeats in two Tests in Pakistan.
South Africa also has senior opening batsman Dean Elgar installed as Test captain following the retirement of Faf du Plessis from the traditional format.
West Indies suffered a setback leading up to the opening Test when fast bowler Shannon Gabriel was ruled out through injury.
Though it opens up the prospect of 19-year-old pacer Jayden Seales making his Test debut, his lack of experience – he has played just one First Class match – could see the selectors opt for Alzarri Joseph.
Brathwaite, Joseph and senior seamer Kemar Roach have all benefited from stints on the English county circuit following the end of the Sri Lanka series.
The likely teams: West Indies: Kraigg Brathwaite (Capt.), Shai Hope, Nkrumah Bonner, Kyle Mayers, Roston Chase, Jermaine Blackwood, Jason Holder, Joshua da Silva (wk), Rahkeem Cornwall, Alzarri Joseph, and Kemar Roach.
South Africa: Dean Elgar (Capt.), Aiden Markram, Rassie van der Dussen, Keegan Petersen, Temba Bavuma, Quinton de Kock (wk), Wiaan Mulder, Keshav Maharaj, Kagiso Rabada, Anrich Nortje, and Lungi Ngidi.



Brathwaite. •FILE PHOTO

FIRST MATCH
June 15
vs Hungary, Budapest, 9.30 p.m.

Form guide: W W D W D
Euro appearances: 7

EURO 2020
JUNE 11 - JULY 11

USUAL FORMATION: 4-3-3

GOALKEEPER
DEFENDERS
MIDFIELDERS
FORWARDS

THE IBERIAN DARK-HORSE
If the Cristiano Ronaldo-led front-line is supported well by a defence marshalled by Ruben Dias, Portugal might just buck the odds in a very tough group

GOALKEEPERS: Anthony Lopes, Rui Patrício, Rui Silva
DEFENDERS: Joao Cancelo, Nelson Semedo, Jose Fonte, Pepe, Ruben Dias, Nuno Mendes, Raphael Guerreiro
MIDFIELDERS: Danilo Pereira, Joao Palhinha, Ruben Neves, Bruno Fernandes, Joao Moutinho, Renato Sanches, Sergio Oliveira, William Carvalho
FORWARDS: Pedro Goncalves, Andre Silva, Bernardo Silva, Cristiano Ronaldo, Diogo Jota, Goncalo Guedes, Joao Felix, Rafa Silva

DID YOU KNOW?
October 2019's loss to Ukraine was the first Portugal had suffered under Fernando Santos in a EURO (or indeed Nations League) game – qualifier or final tournament – since his appointment in September 2014.

COACH: Fernando Santos

KEY PLAYER
Cristiano Ronaldo
Portugal's most-capped player and all-time top scorer. He will be looking to scratch a small itch: he has never top-scored at a EURO or World Cup finals

ONE TO WATCH
Ruben Dias | The central defender was arguably Manchester City's most inspirational player in its dominant run to the Premier League title

Best performance: Winner 2016

COMPILED BY S.V. SRIRAM | SOURCE: UEFA/AGENCIES

