



Left parties announce 15-day protest against hike in fuel prices

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No evidence to suggest third wave will affect children more: report

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Israel coalition set to end Prime Minister Netanyahu's long rule

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Sterling helps England break opening match jinx at Euros

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**NEARBY**



Capital sees 255 fresh COVID cases, 23 deaths

NEW DELHI  
 The Capital recorded 255 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday along with 23 deaths and 376 recoveries. A total of 72,751 tests were conducted in a single day with a test positivity rate of 0.35%. There are 3,466 active cases in the city, out of which 1,037 are under home isolation.

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## A year after Galwan clash, China strengthening base along the LAC

PLA has rotated troops, built fresh infrastructure, hospitals in the area

DINAKAR PERI  
 NEW DELHI

A year since the clash between the Armies of India and China in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has built additional accommodation in the depth areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on its side and is preparing for the long haul, according to official sources. "PLA has built additional accommodations, both per-

manent and temporary, in Rudok, Kangxiwar, Gyantse and Golmud areas. Construction of field hospitals and procurement of additional snow mobility vehicles by the PLA also indicate that they are preparing for the long haul and permanent winter occupation of these posts," a source said.

**Regiments replaced**  
 According to intelligence inputs, the Chinese troops in the Pangong Tso (lake) area



Moving back: A February 10 photo of tanks pulling back from the banks of Pangong Lake. • AP

have all been rotated. China's 4th and 6th Divisions were withdrawn from both the banks of Pangong Lake

to Rutog County for repairs in February, and returned to Xinjiang for repairs in the past three weeks. They were

replaced by the 8th and 11th Divisions. Each division has two mobile infantry regiments, an armoured regiment, an artillery regiment and an air defence regiment.

"China is also intensifying construction work behind the main confrontation points in Aksai Chin," the source said, citing intelligence inputs.

The PLA has also conducted exercises in Tibet and opposite Arunachal Pradesh. For instance, in the first week of this month, the PLA conducted a small arms training at Shigatse in Tibet. The PLA soldiers were

trained in anti-tank rocket launchers, grenade launchers, anti-aircraft machine guns and other weapons, according to inputs.

**SPECIAL**

In early May, Chinese state media *Global Times* reported that a unit of the PLA in the Xinjiang Military District under the Western Theatre Command had deployed new long-range heavy rocket artillery in the border region at an altitude of 5,200 metres.

Training was also recently conducted at a location op-

posite Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh at an altitude of 5,130 metres by a regiment from the Shannan Army Division, the official stated.

Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat recently said all Armies carried out training activities during peacetime, and the conduct of exercises was one such event to maintain operational preparedness. He added that China as well as India had carried out turnover of troops, and the best way to familiarise new troops was to carry out exercises.

CONTINUED ON > PAGE 8

## Fight against authoritarianism, extremism, says PM at G7 meet

India natural ally of the grouping, says Modi at special session on open societies

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
 NEW DELHI

India is a "natural ally" to work with the world's richest G7 countries to fight against threats of authoritarianism, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at a special outreach session for guest countries on "Open Societies and Open Economies" at the G7 summit that ended in Corbis Bay, U.K., on Sunday.

Marking out the need for a "free, open and inclusive" Indo-Pacific, officials also said the government will study U.S. President Joseph Biden's proposal for a "Build Back Better World" (B3W) initiative, seen as a counter to China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative, that was endorsed by the G7, keeping in mind the principles of "transparency and inclusion".

However, in a departure

### Making a commitment

A look at some of the key outcomes of the G7 summit

- G7 to donate 1 billion vaccine doses to developing nations
- G7 to Build Back Better World (B3W) alternative infrastructure initiative to counter China's BRI

- It reaffirms tax deal for global minimum corporate tax rates
- It calls for inquiry into the origins of COVID-19
- PM calls on tech companies and social media platforms to ensure a safe cyber environment for all



month. "As the world's largest democracy, India is a natural ally for the G7 and Guest Countries to defend shared values from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation and infodemics and economic coercion," said MEA Secretary (Economic Relations) P. Harish, describing Mr. Modi's virtual intervention at the summit, where Mr. Modi was the only leader not to be physically present, owing to the COVID-19 second wave in India.

Mr. Modi also called on "tech companies and social media platforms" to ensure a "safe cyber environment" for all, a statement significant given the government's recent regulatory issues with Facebook, Twitter and other tech companies.

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from the main 25-page G7 communique, which was issued by U.S., U.K., Germany, France, Canada, Italy and Japan, and contained negative references to China on the issue of its aggression in the East and South China Sea, and human rights issues in Xinjiang, MEA officials said Chinese aggression "was not raised" at the outreach meetings with guest countries Australia, South Korea and

South Africa, and that there are "other forums" where it is being discussed.

The communique also made a strong call for a "timely, transparent, expert-led, and science-based WHO-convened Phase 2 COVID-19 Origins study including, as recommended by the experts' report, in China," that India had also called for in a statement during the World Health Assembly last

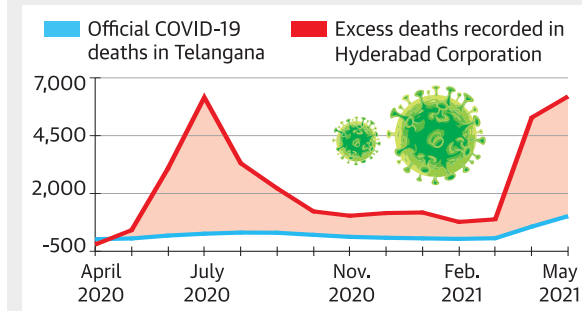
## Hyderabad toll shows massive undercount

GHMC excess deaths 10 times Telangana toll

SRINIVASAN RAMANI  
 VIGNESH RADHAKRISHNAN

The number of "excess deaths" registered in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GMHC) ever since COVID-19 hit (from April 2020 to May 2021), is over 10 times the officially recorded figure of 3,275 deaths for the corresponding period in the entire State of Telangana. There were an estimated 32,752 "excess deaths" - 18,420 between April and December 2020

**Unaccounted for** | Analysis of deaths registered by the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation shows that "excess deaths" were 10 times the official COVID-19 death toll in entire Telangana State between April 2020 and May 2021



and 14,332 between January and May 2021.

Excess deaths in the GHMC were calculated

based on the number of death certificates issued. The month-wise number for the last two years was ac-

cessed by *The Hindu* and compared with data for 2016 to 2019 that were obtained via an RTI. The 2021 figures were analysed till May 31.

For the first five months of 2021, the 14,332 excess deaths in the city corporation limits were 8.2 times more than the official COVID-19 death toll of 1,740 for the entire State. These "excess deaths" were calculated as the difference between the 36,041 certified deaths in 2021 and the average number of certified deaths in the same period in the pre-pandemic years between 2016 and 2019 (21,709).

CONTINUED ON > PAGE 8

## Delhi lifts more curbs, eateries to reopen with 50% capacity

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said all shops and markets, restaurants at 50% capacity, and religious places will be allowed to open from June 14 under the phased unlock plan for the city.

Authorities will observe the situation at the markets and restaurants for a week. If people follow COVID-19 protocols and cases do not increase in the next week, they will be allowed to remain open, he said.

"The pandemic situation is coming under control in Delhi. Cases have reduced significantly... now the concern is to bring the economy back on track. In case a third wave comes, preparations for that are in full swing," the CM said.

Last week, shops were allowed to open only on an odd-even basis, now they can open on all days from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Beauty parlours and barber shops can open along with one weekly market per zone per day.

Educational institutions; gatherings and congregations for social, political, sports, entertainment and festivals; cinema halls, auditoriums, banquet halls, spas, gyms, yoga institutes, public parks and gardens will remain closed.

Marriages can be held only at home or in court with a maximum of 20 people in attendance.

## Touched by love from Arunachal: YouTuber

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 GUWAHATI

YouTuber Paras Singh, who was granted bail by a court in Arunachal Pradesh capital Itanagar on June 11, said he was touched by the love

and care from the people of the State he had derided in one of his videos.

The social media influencer also told the local media that he was going back home enlightened about the

State and the Northeast.

"I realised I made a great mistake and hurt the sentiments of the people of Arunachal Pradesh," he said.

DETAILS ON > PAGE 8

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# THE LINGERING WAVE

The number of infected patients has come down, but not quite those in ICU and on ventilators. Doctors cite "overwhelming" number of moderate and severe patients during the relatively short second wave as reasons for continuing occupancy of ICUs

JATIN ANAND  
NIKHIL M BABU  
NEW DELHI

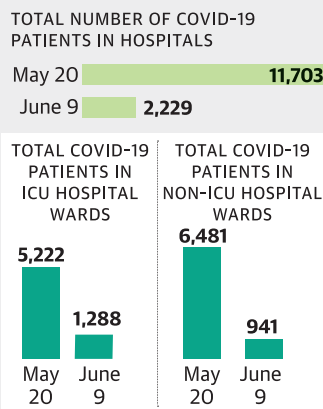
The second wave of the pandemic has nearly passed on, but the havoc it wreaked still remains. Cases are dropping by the day, from five-digit figures in the middle of last month, it has slipped to three digits by the middle of June. Yet, nearly 1,300 patients are in need of intensive medical care at hospitals, according to Delhi government records.

Worryingly, every second patient occupying a hospital bed in the Capital is recovering from severe repercussions of the virus infection on their respiratory system. The pattern of prolonged recuperation period, according to doctors, is as "difficult" to predict as its outcome.

There were 11,703 hospitalised COVID-19 patients on May 20 - 6,481 in non-ICU wards and 5,222 in ICUs - when the city had recorded as many as 35,683 new cases in 24 hours. Over the next three weeks, the number of beds occupied in hospitals registered a steep drop of 80% with their total occupancy plummeting to 2,229 by June 9. The daily caseload, by that time, had dropped to 4,212.

However, while the number of occupied non-ICU beds fell to 941 from 6,481, as many as 1,288 ICU beds were still occupied at the end of the 21-day period compared to 5,222 on May 20. A dovetailing of non-ICU and ICU hospital bed occupancy during the second wave reveals that, on

## Falling numbers



SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT

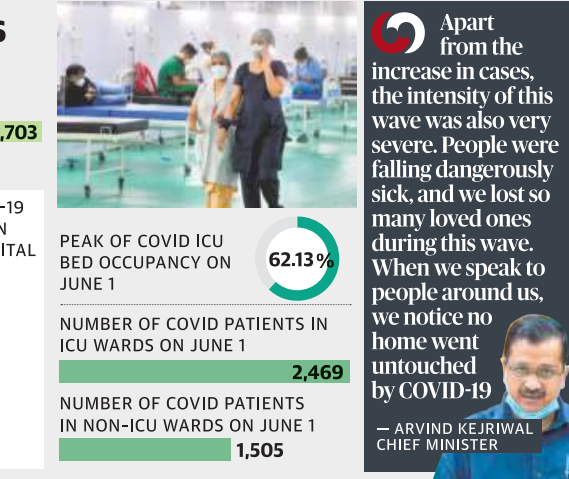
average, COVID-19 patients recuperating on ICU beds constituted over 56% of the total patients every day during the 21-day interval in Delhi's hospitals.

### Significant presence

Save for three days - May 20, 21 and 22 - the number of patients in ICU wards outnumbered those in non-ICU wards. On May 20, there were 6,481 patients on non-ICU beds against 5,222 on ICU ones, 5,694 against 5,017 on May 21 and 5,001 against 4,880 on May 22. ICU patients remained significantly higher compared to non-ICU patients for the remaining 18 days.

According to records, the peak occupancy of ICU beds - 62.13% - came on June 1 when the city reported 9,364 new cases and 2,469 patients were in ICU compared to 1,505 on non-ICU beds. By the middle of last week, ICU occupancy had gone down to 57.78%.

Doctors cited two reasons. One was the "overwhelming" numbers of



Apart from the increase in cases, the intensity of this wave was also very severe. People were falling dangerously sick, and we lost so many loved ones during this wave. When we speak to people around us, we notice no home went untouched by COVID-19

— ARVIND KEJRIWAL  
CHIEF MINISTER

moderate and severe patients who turned to city hospitals during the second wave. Besides the wave was shorter, though lethal, compared to the first, which peaked in November last year. Even during that time, it took about three months for most patients to be discharged from the ICU, says B.K. Rao, Chairman of Critical Care Department at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

"After the first wave peak in November, most of the ICU patients could be discharged in the following three months," Dr. Rao

said. However, 35% of the total patients in hospitals are in ICU beds with ventilators. Dr. Rao explains: "During the first wave, the cases were spread out and it happened over a couple of months. But during the second wave, the cases happened over a short span as the wave was there only for about one and a half to two months."

Many have yet to recover from post-COVID infections. "Some who have been tested negative continue to be hospitalised as they have yet to recover



Patients receiving treatment at a banquet hall converted into a COVID facility in the city. • FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

from lung condition caused by it. Patients who have turned negative are shifted to the non-COVID ICU. These patients are either requiring ventilator support or high oxygen support. It is difficult to predict their recovery pattern and their outcome at this point," he says, adding that the number of moderate to severe COVID patients who came to the hospital was overwhelming during the second wave.

Sumit Ray, Head of Department of Critical Care at Holy Family Hospital says it is a general trend that after the peak, most admitted in hospitals will be in ICUs.

### Global pattern

"What happens after peak surge is that a lot of patients with severe lung damage stay on ventilators for a long time. Irrespective of the waves, it is true across the world. When the numbers dip, most of the people in hospitals will be in ICUs. People going to the ventilator will stay on the ventilator for four to six weeks. That is why currently more than one-third of the total patients are in ICU beds with ventilators," Dr. Ray points out.

Precisely for this reason, the number of people in ventilators won't fall at the same rate as the cases. Besides, the total number of people who tested positive was high during the second wave. Automatically, there would be more severely infected people.

"Even during the first wave, when the cases were peaking, we had said that the ICU bed requirement would go up a little later. Initially, we needed more oxygen beds and casualty beds, but later on, we will need more ICU beds and ventilators. Evidence in literature across the world supports this. It has nothing to do with the first or the second wave. This is what happens in COVID," Dr. Ray added.

# Capital sees 255 fresh cases with 23 deaths

Atishi says less than 1 day of Covishield stock left for youth

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Capital recorded 255 fresh COVID-19 cases on Sunday along with 23 deaths and 376 recoveries, according to a health bulletin released by the Delhi government.

The bulletin said 72,751 tests were conducted with a positivity rate of 0.35%. There are 3,466 active cases in the city, of which 1,037 are under home isolation. The total number of cases recorded till date now stand at 14,31,139 with 24, 823 deaths.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the COVID situation has improved significantly in the Capital and

now and the focus is on economic revival along with preparations for a possible third wave.

"I hope the cases continue to decline rapidly so that slowly our lives can get back on track. This has been a great tragedy and we have to battle this together. We have to hope that the cases don't increase, and a third wave does not come," Mr. Kejriwal said as he announced the lifting of several restrictions.

The government said 83,286 beneficiaries were vaccinated in 24 hours, of which 54,928 have received their first dose. Cumulative beneficiaries stand at 60,72,572, of which

14,40,394 have gotten both doses.

Senior AAP leader Atishi said less than two days of stock of Covaxin left for youth and less than one day of Covishield.

She said it has been observed that as soon as the vaccination programme starts for the youth, the speed of the drive increases.

"We would like to appeal to the Central government to maintain a regular supply of vaccines for the youth - 18-44 years. The more vaccines we make available to the youth, the more hesitation about the vaccination will be removed."

# Over 50 shanties of Rohingya refugees gutted in city blaze

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

More than 50 shanties were gutted in a fire that broke out at a Rohingya refugee camp near the Kalindi Kunj Metro station in south-east Delhi, said officials on Sunday.

### No injuries

The incident took place on June 12 and the Fire Department received information about it around 11.55 p.m., a senior fire official said, adding that no one was injured.

Five fire tenders were rushed to the spot near the Kalindi Kunj Metro station, Madanpur Khadar. The fire was brought under control around 3 a.m., the official said. According to police, a PCR call regarding the fire at the Rohingya camp was re-



A Rohingya boy collecting remains after the major fire in south-east Delhi on Sunday. • R.V. MOORTHY

ceived at the Kalindi Kunj police station.

The police reached the spot in Kanchan Kunj, Madanpur Khadar. Later, the fire was brought under control, a senior police officer said. "Fifty-six shanties,

housing around 270 Rohingya refugees, were gutted in the fire. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained and appropriate legal action is being taken," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-East) R.P. Meena.

# Couldn't Complete Degree, What Next?



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There are many who could not complete degree due to reasons beyond their control. All these people have been cursing their luck and have remained either unemployed or under employed. Some, by sheer hard work and determination have found jobs, but are still staring at a not-so-bright future due to lack of graduate/postgraduate qualifications. In the present competitive environment, graduate and postgraduate qualifications are a must for career progress.

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# Elderly woman found murdered in Burari

Entry to house was friendly: police

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 65-year-old woman was found dead with a slit throat and burn injuries in north Delhi's Burari, the police said on Sunday.

The victim has been identified as Rajwari from Kamalpur, they said.

The police said the case came to the fore when her 38-year-old son Parmod informed the police.

Parmod who runs a dhaba said he and his wife had gone to Khajuri on Saturday and when they returned home around 10 p.m., they saw Rajwari lying dead.

The entry into the house

was friendly and it appears that the accused were known to Rajwari, the police said.

The body was shifted to Sabzi Mandi mortuary and the post-mortem will be conducted on Sunday.

### Manhunt on

A case of murder has been registered and three teams have been formed to nab the accused. The police are looking into all aspects, including the theft angle, the officer said.

An officer said CCTV footage being checked to ascertain the identities of the accused.

# 42-yr-old woman held for sexually assaulting minor

Accused runs an NGO, say police

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A 42-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor girl in south-west Delhi's Dabri, the police said on Sunday.

According to the FIR, the 16-year-old's mother and the accused were known to each other.

The teenager's mother had sent her to the accused's house to learn things related to a parlour. When she returned, the daughter refused to go back home as the accused had threatened to upload her obscene video, which she had recorded, on social media.

The accused also threatened to kill her and her mother if she leaves the house, the victim alleged.

The accused, who runs an NGO, sexually abused and assaulted the minor, and also forced her to do household chores, an offic-

One day, the victim fell ill and was taken to a doctor when she managed to contact her mother and informed her about the ordeal. Later, police were informed about the incident

er said. One day, the victim fell ill and was taken to a doctor when she managed to contact her mother and informed her about the ordeal. Later, police were informed about the incident.

A case under Sections 4 and 6 of the Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 377 (unnatural sex) of the Indian Penal Code have been registered.

The police said the accused was previously involved in two criminal cases.

# Monsoon expected in next 48 hours, says Met

Capital may witness light rain today

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Met department on Sunday evening said conditions are favourable for the advancement of the southwest monsoon to Delhi during the next 48 hours.

The normal date for the arrival of the southwest monsoon in the Capital is June 27.

### No heat waves

This year, the Capital has not experienced any heat waves and the highest the mercury has touched is 42.2 degrees Celsius. On Sunday, the maximum temperature recorded was 35.2 degrees Celsius, which was four degrees below normal for the season. The minimum settled at 23.8 degrees Celsius, which was also four degrees below normal.

"The southwest monsoon has further advanced into some more parts of Madhya Pradesh; entire Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal,

Jharkhand and Bihar; most parts of East Uttar Pradesh; some parts of West Uttar Pradesh; entire Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan & Muzaffarabad; some parts of north Haryana, Chandigarh and north Punjab on June 13," the Met department said.

The bulletin added that conditions are favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into most parts of Madhya Pradesh; remaining parts East Uttar Pradesh; Delhi; some parts of West Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab during next 48 hours.

The forecast for June 14 reads: "Generally cloudy sky with light rain/thundershowers. Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to hover between 34 and 25 degrees Celsius."

The extended forecast shows that rain is expected in the Capital for the next four days.

# 3 held for robbing man of mobile phone, cash

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Three people have been arrested for allegedly robbing a man in south Delhi's Malviya Nagar, the police said on Sunday.

The accused have been identified as Rohit, Chandan Kumar Rai, and Malloda alias Varsha, they said.

The complainant in the case, Rohit Taneja from Lajpat Nagar, told the police that on Saturday while going back home, a woman signalled him to stop near Saket Court, saying her friend was lying injured near a hospital, an officer said.

Mr. Taneja along with the woman reached the hospital

where he saw two men waiting at the spot. The three then robbed him of his mobile phone, documents and around ₹8,000-₹10,000 cash, the officer said. The accused then sped off in an autorickshaw.

During investigation, the autorickshaw was found registered in one Harish's name. The police along with the complainant reached Harish's house following which Rohit was arrested, said DCP (South) Atul Kumar Thakur. Based on Rohit's disclosure, Malloda and Rai were also arrested. The autorickshaw, cash and Aadhaar card were recovered from their possession.



■ MADHUVANTI S KRISHNAN

Studies have shown that when there is an economic downturn, there is an increase in applications for Graduate Management Education. This has held true in the time of COVID-19 as well. B-Schools have shifted to online learning and revamped their curriculum. In fact, says Gaurav Srivastava, Regional Director-South Asia, Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), which owns and administers the GMAT exam, with vaccines becoming increasingly available, prospective students are more inclined to chase their dream of studying abroad.

**Digital move**  
With this in mind, GMAC moved to holding its exam online. "To make it more competitive and on a par with the Test Centre GMAT exam, we announced enhancements to the GMAT online exam like including the Analytical Writing Assessment (AWA) section and the ability to preview unofficial test scores immediately, additional and extended breaks, and the convenience to select the order in which the sections of the exam are attempted," explained Srivastava. He also added that the online exam had evolved from an interim to a permanent solution. "In less than a year, we have made enhancements including the use of physical and online whiteboards, disability accommodations, and the option to retake the online exam. The agenda is to provide flexibility and support to address the long-term needs of schools and test-takers."

Apart from the exam, the organisation also conducts surveys on what corporates look for in their recruits, and on student concerns, aspirations,

## The business of Business Education

To comply with student needs in the wake of the pandemic and beyond, GMAC has introduced tweaks and enhancements to its GMAT exam



The agenda is to provide flexibility and support to address the long-term needs of schools and test-takers...

opportunities that digitisation has opened up, international candidates preferred mobility over online. "Over 40% of international candidates – those who wish to study outside their country of citizenship – preferred working outside their country of citizenship, as the primary career motivation," he added.

Interestingly, despite a myriad options in many foreign universities, the U.S and the U.K., continue to remain the most favoured destinations. "International candidates deem the U.S. as one of their top three choices to study Business abroad, while prospective Indian students ranked it ahead of their home country," he said.

The ATS showed that, despite the pandemic and the consequent recession, the demand for MBA courses had increased, as students sought to combat the recession and improve their career prospects by boosting their credentials. In turn, the uncertainty caused by the pandemic compelled B-Schools to adopt a more flexible approach in their recruitment, admission, and programmes.

For students in India, said Srivastava, the GMAC has announced that candidates can now validate their identity using their Aadhaar Card or passport while registering online for the exam. "This will provide easier access to candidates, as those living in remote areas will find it easier to use their Aadhaar ID and appear virtually from anywhere."

goals, and what they seek in their dream B-school. These include the Global GME Candidate Segmentation, which differentiates candidates by their motivations and helps them connect with prospective students; Corporate Recruiters Survey, which provides vital

insights to keep B-schools up-to-date on the latest trends in the hiring market; the Application Trends Survey (ATS), which sheds light on the current market for graduate B-school applicants, and the Prospective Students Survey (PSS), which provides a peek into the

motivations, preferences, programme choices, and opinions of individuals who are contemplating attempting the GMAT exam. Speaking of the PSS and ATS conducted between July and December last year, Srivastava says, "One major finding from

the PSS was that women were more receptive to remote learning than men, and were willing to adapt their plans for higher education. Specifically, women candidates are more likely to seek the flexibility of online learning than men." What's more, despite the

## Map your career

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This Q&A column by Nandini Raman, practising counsellor and trainer, may help



OFF THE EDGE  
NANDINI RAMAN

I'm a 20-year-old studying for the UPSC. My problem is that my parents sometimes say things that seem relevant from their perspective. I am not always able to take what they say or ignore it. This leads to me getting distracted and having panic attacks. How do I deal with this? - Shruti

Dear Shruti,  
Welcome to a 'generation gap'. I understand it is rather tough to understand, comprehend, appreciate, value, welcome, and ignore what our parents say to us. Know that they feel the same too; in fact a little more displaced when their little one is all grown up, independent and doesn't want to pay heed and attention to what they have to say and share. It is a process of letting go, one that is hard for parents and their child.

One thing that might help is to perhaps give them the benefit of the doubt. 'Why' are they saying what they are saying? Hear them out and you can still 'agree to disagree'. Also, I believe open, honest, two-way communication will help them understand what you are going through especially your panic attacks and mental health. Bare yourself and tell them exactly what you feel and experience without accusing them. If this doesn't work, please meet a family counsellor for a family session. They will help moderate this for you.

I am a Class XII student with Humanities subjects. What are my future options apart from the Civil Services? - Priyansh  
Dear Priyansh,  
There are so many great options and opportunities today for students who take Humanities in Class XII. You can branch into specific courses of your interest, as a pure major or a double major or even join a liberal arts course for your undergrad. Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy,

English literature, Political Science, History, Art, Education... each allows various lucrative choices and, depending on your core interest, you can further your education in that specific stream. You can choose law, mass communication, media and journalism, clinical psychology, sports, fashion designing, hotel management, event management, MBA, teaching, yoga and nutrition, career counselling, a foreign language course and so on. Identify what excites you long-term to become a fulfilling career choice.

My sister is in Class XII but doesn't know what her interests are or what course she wants to pursue. How can we help her? - Anamika  
Dear Anamika,  
Speak to her and get an understanding of what she likes academically and what she wants to be when she is grown up, and subjects that she completely enjoys and detests. Her interests can be further identified through a detailed subjective career profiling that will help her understand

herself much better. It will identify her strengths, likes, dislikes, skills, attitude, values and personality attributes. A detailed aptitude test (nine cognitive tests) will also help. She needs to be minimum of 14 years, though, to take this aptitude test.

I am in the final semester of my undergraduate degree in Life Science. What do I need to do to become a medical coder?  
Medical coding is an upcoming, in-demand field in Healthcare Administration. To pursue it, you must have a Bachelor's or Master's degree, preferably from Life Science background. You must also have analytical ability to read and analyse medical records and patient details using the right codes for the billing procedure – something you will learn on the job.

**Disclaimer: This column provides advice, guidance and suggestions. It is a guiding voice from a practising counsellor and not a substitute for therapy.**

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to [eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com](mailto:eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com) with the subject line 'Off the edge'.

### SAVE THE DATE

#### M.Sc. Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Strathclyde Business School, Glasgow, invites applications for its new M.Sc. Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship course starting in September 2021. The programme

concludes with an individual summer project for a social enterprise.  
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For more articles, columns, and news on admissions and new courses, visit [www.thehindu.co.in/education](http://www.thehindu.co.in/education)



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### SCHOLARSHIPS

#### Digital Bharati COVID Scholarship

Digital Bharati COVID Scholarship invites applications from children who are left vulnerable owing to a COVID-led crisis.  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to Indian students from Classes 1 to 12 who have lost one/both parents since January 2020.  
**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** Vouchers to get subscriptions for leading ed-tech companies and access to tablets/laptops.  
**APPLICATION:** Online  
**DEADLINE:** July 31  
[b4s.in/edge/DBC51](http://b4s.in/edge/DBC51)

#### VNIT Nagpur Department of Electrical Engineering Junior Research Fellowship

Visvesvaraya National

Institute of Technology, Nagpur, invites applications for the funded research project "Highly Efficient and Reliable Solid State Transformer for Future Distribution Network with Renewable Energy Support".  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to candidates with an M.Tech/M.E. degree in Electrical Engineering Department with specialisation in Power Electronics/Electrical Drives/Power System/Control System or equivalent. They must have qualified in the GATE exam and have proficiency in MATLAB, PSIM, PCB Design Software, and Microcontroller/Digital Signal Controller/FPGA.  
**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** ₹35,000 per month plus HRA  
**APPLICATION:** Online and email  
**DEADLINE:** June 18  
[b4s.in/edge/NJF7](http://b4s.in/edge/NJF7)

#### DXC Progressing Minds Scholarship

DXC Technology supports students from underprivileged sections.  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Open to Indian nationals presently in the first year of BE/BTech programme in CS/IT/EE/EC streams in the AY 2021-22. They must have obtained at least 60% marks in the previous class. The annual family income should not exceed ₹4 lakhs. Applicants must not be availing any other scholarship benefits of ₹6,000 per annum or more.  
**PRIZES AND REWARDS:** 50% of the total fees or ₹40,000 per annum (whichever is less)  
**APPLICATION:** Online  
**DEADLINE:** June 15  
[b4s.in/edge/DXC1](http://b4s.in/edge/DXC1)  
Courtesy: [buddy4study.com](http://buddy4study.com)



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**Timings**  
**DELHI**

**MONDAY, JUN. 14**  
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21  
RISE 08:29 SET 22:41

**TUESDAY, JUN. 15**  
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21  
RISE 09:28 SET 23:21

**WEDNESDAY, JUN. 16**  
RISE 05:24 SET 19:21  
RISE 10:27 SET 23:58

**Delhi Weather** max min

Delhi City 35 24  
Safdarjang 35 24  
Palam 34 23

**Delhi Palam Today**  
35°C Few spell of rain and thunderstorm with gusty winds likely at some places. Warm and humid day with cloudy sky.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
35°C Light rain and thunderstorm may occur at some places. Humid weather would continue with cloudy sky.

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**IN BRIEF**

**Jama Masjid structures damaged in dust storms**  
NEW DELHI  
The structures of the historic Jama Masjid in Old Delhi have suffered damage in two dust storms within a week's time, the Shahi Imam of the mosque said.



# Unlocking the Capital

After nearly two months of complete lockdown, the city is incrementally rolling up the shutters. With cases coming down, the government has flicked the restart switch. Over the past two weeks, it has allowed several activities to resume. With Sunday's announcement, the city is inching closer towards normal times

PHOTOS BY R.V. MOORTHY, SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA AND SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



1. Homeless and needy waiting for free meal on the banks of the Yamuna in the Capital; 2. COVID-19 testing in progress; 3. a woman labourer at a construction site; 4. municipal workers cleaning a drain; 5. Industrial workers busy with work; 6. commuters deboarding at Rajiv Chowk metro station; 7. youngsters enjoying an outing at Connaught Place; 8. people waiting in queue at a mohalla clinic.

## Court rejects plea of overweight applicant

Petitioner did not meet IAF fitness criteria for airmen

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has rejected the appeal of a man, seeking appointment as airman in the Indian Air Force, challenging the Medical Board's decision declaring him 'unfit' for service on three grounds - being overweight, unable to squat, and suffering from hyperbilirubinemia.



The High Court took into account the response of the government that the ideal weight prescribed in the Manual of Medical Examination and Medical Boards for the height of the petitioner, Amit Kumar, of 178 cm and 19 years, was 63 kgs with a margin of 6.3 kgs.

"However the weight of the petitioner [Mr. Kumar], as per the records produced, on the date of the examination by the Medical Board as well as by the Appeal Medical Board was way above i.e., 83 kgs and 80 kgs respectively," the court said. "Since one ground is

enough for this petition to be dismissed, we are not opting to go into other two grounds of rejection," the court said while rejecting the petition. The court also remarked that the petitioner is not found to be controverting the finding of the Appeal Medical Board, that his weight on December 30, 2020 was 83 kgs and on March 1, 2021 was 80 kgs.

"Suffice it to say that, the petitioner, without imputing any mala fides to the officers constituting the Medical Board/Appeal Medical Board, cannot controvert their findings as to having weighed the petitioner," the High Court said while dismissing the plea.

## Man arrested in Delhi riots case granted bail

Court says there is no direct evidence

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has granted bail to a man, who was arrested for being part of a mob and indulging in pelting stones during the north-east Delhi riots last year, saying that there is no direct evidence like CCTV footage.

Thereafter, on February 27 he succumbed to injuries during treatment.

Shabudine was arrested on March 20 last year in connection with the case.

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait also took account of the fact that the co-accused of petitioner have been granted bail in this case.

"According to the chargesheet, the role attributed to the petitioner [Shabudine] is of being part of the mob and participating in the riots and indulging in pelting stones. How and in what matter the claim of prosecution that petitioner's role is different than the other co-accused will be tested during trial," the court noted.

The crux of the prosecution case is that the FIR was registered at the instance of one Pappu, who has alleged that on February 25, 2020 at about 2.15 p.m., when his brother Babu reached Khajuri Khas, he was attacked by the mob and received grievous in-

"Chargesheet in this case has been filed. However, the charge is yet to be framed and trial will take substantial time," the court said while granting bail to Shabudine.

## DMRC holds street plays on benefits of jab

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

To raise awareness about the benefits of vaccination against COVID, the Delhi Metro is organising a series of street plays at its construction sites.

Targeting a small group at a time, these plays expect to reach out to over 3,000 workers and encourage them to get vaccinated. The Delhi Metro said professional artists, who work in commercial movies, TV shows and web series have been roped in for the programme. "Since most of the workers come from U.P., Bihar, the shows are designed in different dialects spoken in rural parts of these regions," a DMRC spokesperson said.

## Couple strangled by son in Ghaziabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
GHAZIABAD

A man was arrested for allegedly strangulating to death his elderly parents and also deceiving the police by claiming it to be a robbery-cum-murder at their home in Loni, officials said on Sunday.

towel used in the crime, ₹15,000 in cash, and a fixed deposit certificate of ₹5 lakh.

Superintendent of Police (Rural) Iraj Raja said the accused was sent to jail after a case was lodged under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

Police arrested the accused, Ravi Dhaka, on Sunday and recovered a nylon rope, a

to his house in Balram Nagar of Loni area in the district, the SP said. He was worried that the entire family property would be passed on to his younger brother's family, the officer said. At the scene of the crime, Ravi fooled the police of a robbery as he had thrown goods and clothes in a haphazard way.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**SKIMS MEDICAL COLLEGE-HOSPITAL**  
Bemina, Srinagar Kashmir-190018 Department of Material Management  
0194-2492226, mmo@skims.edu.in

**Sub: Amendment, Corrigendum & 2nd Extension in eNIT No. SKIMS-MCH-MMD -02 of 2021 dated 30/04/2021.**

The e-NIT No. SKIMS-MCH-MMD-02 of 2021 dated 30/04/2021 regarding S.I.T.C of one (01) unit of 1000mA Digital Radiography System with Dual Detectors (Two Detectors) for whole body Digital Radiography in the Department of Radiology, SKIMS MCH, Bemina is hereby amended in respect of technical specifications, to the following extent.

S.No. in Tech. Specs. of e-NIT	Existing tendered specifications	Now to be read as
05 (b)	Online UPS with suitable rating and 30 minute back-up for onsole/digital system should be supplied along with DR System	Online UPS with suitable rating and 30 minute back-up for console and digital system should be supplied along with DR System

The said eNIT is also modified in respect of terms & conditions, as per following description:

S.No. in terms & conditions of eNIT	Existing tendered specifications	Now to be read as
(10)	<b>Validity of tender:</b> The tenders must be valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of the financial bids. Conditional tenders shall not be accepted. No escalation of rates shall be allowed by the Institute during the currency of the contract. The validity should be extendable for further duration as mutually agreed upon.	The tenders must be valid for a period of 270 days from the date of opening of the technical bids. Conditional tenders shall not be accepted. No escalation of rates shall be allowed by the Institute during the currency of the contract. The validity should be extendable for further duration as mutually agreed upon.

Also the eNIT is extended for a further period of two (02) weeks, as per following revised schedule.

Last date for submission of online bids	25/06/2021
Opening of Technical bids on	27/06/2021 at 02:00 PM

Other terms & conditions of the eNIT shall remain unchanged.

No: SKIMS/MCH/MMD/eNIT/S-394/19-20/2009-16  
Dated: 10/06/2021

Sd/  
Materials Management Officer,  
SKIMS MCH Bemina  
DIP/K-NB-1164/21

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI**  
Solid Waste Management Department  
**e-TENDER NOTICE**

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) invites online Bids for "Appointment of Agency to audit the labour law compliances"  
The bids can be downloaded from MCGM's portal (<http://portal.mcgm.gov.in>) under "e-procurement" section.  
The Bid Start Date and time is 14.06.2021 after 02.00 P.M. and the Bid End Date and time is 25.06.2021 up to 4.00 P.M.  
The intending bidders shall visit the Municipal web site at (<http://portal.mcgm.gov.in>) for further details of the tender.  
The bid document will not be issued or received by post.  
PRO/467/ADV/2021/2022  
Sd/  
Jt.Ch.LO(SWM)  
Let's together and make Mumbai Malaria free.

**KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION - e-TENDER**  
**ABRIDGED NIT**

The Director General (C), KMC invites tender online percentage rate two bid system for following works:

(1) NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/Br-X/098/013/2020-2021/R (3rd Call)  
Name of Work: Maintenance of approach road near Masterda Surya Sen Metro station in Ward No.-98, Br.-X. Estimated cost including GST and CESS: ₹ 8,07,662.26. Earnest Money: ₹ 16,200/-.

(2) NIT No.: KMC/DG(C)/Br-X/091/027/2020-2021/D (2nd Call)  
Name of Work: Restoration of IPS & Asphaltum road disturbed by W/S Department at Kamala Park, Sarala Punyo Ashram, 87 Bosepukur, 15, 28, 31, N. K. Ghosal Road etc. in Ward No.-91, Br.-X. Estimated cost including GST and CESS: ₹ 5,90,493.27. Earnest Money: ₹ 11,900/-.

(3) NIT No.: KMC/DG(CIVIL)/Br-XIV/128/056/2020-21 (1st Call)  
Name of Work: Construction of pathway at Dr. A. K. Paul Road Bye Lane near Sarkar Math Jhil in Ward No.-128. Estimated cost: ₹ 6,62,385.77 (Incl. GST & CESS). Earnest Money: ₹ 15,300/-.

Period of Completion: 30 days. Last date of submission of Bid: 05.07.2021 (Upto 11.00 a.m.). Tender will be opened on: 07.07.2021 (11.00 a.m.). The Bid forms and other details are available on and from 14.06.2021 (5.00 p.m.) from the website: <https://etender.wb.nic.in>. 114/21-22

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF GREATER MUMBAI**  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BHARATRATNA DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR MUN. GEN. HOSPITAL,  
KANDIVALI (W) MUMBAI 400067  
No.HO/BDBA/ 3169 /SR date 11.06.2021  
**E-TENDER NOTICE**

Medical Superintendent, Bharatratna Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Mun. Gen. Hospital, Kandivali (w), Mumbai - 400 067. Invites Three Statge Bid E-Tender for following work.  
Details regarding - E Tender notice will be available on website [www.mcgm.gov.in](http://www.mcgm.gov.in) or Brihanmumbai Mahanagarपालिका.  
The Details of the e-Tender is as follows:

Sr.No	Description	Bid No.	Cost of E-Tender Form Fee	EMD Rs.	Start and Time of online Downloading	Date and Time of Bid Submission	End Date and Time of online Bid Submission
01.	Providing 50 MPL through NGO for 03 months on contract basis	7100211786	Rs. 4500/- + 5.00% GST	89084/-	Dt. 14.06.2021 at 12.00 pm	Dt. 22.06.2021 at 01.00 pm	

Note:  
- Last date payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) online is on before due date and time prescribed.  
- Corrigendum if any will be published on MCGM website only.

The Municipal Commissioner reserves the right to reject all or any of the E-Tender without assigning any reason at any stage.

Sd/  
Medical Superintendent  
Bharatratna Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital, Kandivali (W)  
PRO/465/ADV/2021/2022  
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IN BRIEF



**Cong. MP alleges threat from CPI(M) activists**

**PALAKKAD**  
Congress MP Ramya Haridas has filed a police complaint alleging that a few CPI(M) activists threatened and verbally abused her. The Alathur MP said she was threatened by a group led by former Alathur panchayat vice president M.A. Nazar and councillor Najeeb during a cleaning drive on Sunday.

**Baby injured in attack by mother's partner**

**KANNUR**  
A one-year-old child has been admitted to the Government Medical College Hospital, Kannur, with fractures on the collarbone and swelling on the face. The child sustained injuries in an alleged attack by a man who was living with her mother. The police have arrested the child's mother and accused Ratheesh. The child is out of danger.

**Mentally unstable man beaten to death by police**

**MADIKERI**  
A 50-year-old mentally unstable man, Roy D'Souza, was beaten to death allegedly by policemen for violating lockdown norms here in Karnataka last week, following which eight of them have been suspended, said a senior police officer. The policemen were booked on a complaint by the man's brother. PTI

**68, including techies, booked for holding party**

**HYDERABAD**  
As many as 68 youngsters, including 21 women techies, were booked by the Cyberabad police on Sunday for taking part in a birthday party at a farmhouse in a village in Telangana's Ranga Reddy district in violation of COVID-19 norms. Criminal cases will be registered against the organisers and the youngsters, the police said.

# Demand stokes illegal rosewood felling

Probe in Kerala into the lucrative black market

G. ANAND  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The steep demand in the international market for musical instruments and furniture fashioned out of rosewood had stoked the widespread illegal felling of the endangered tropical hardwood tree from revenue land assigned to farmers for cultivation during 2020-21, according to Kerala Forest Department investigators.

Forest Minister A.K. Saseendran told *The Hindu* that he had asked the forest vigilance to take stock of protected trees on land assigned to farmers. "I expect them to give a set of recommendations on how to monitor the health of the trees and preserve them without hampering farmers' livelihood."

The vigilance had opened an inquiry into the lucrative



A rosewood tree that was axed in Wayanad. ■ FILE PHOTO

black market for the endangered species. It would audit the State's "forest wealth" lost to illegal loggers. Investigators said a bulk of the coveted rosewood ended in China. Misdeclaration of cargo at ports facilitated the racket, they said.

Across the State, an "influential criminal mafia" had felled protected trees by misinterpreting an October 2020 revenue order allowing farmers to harvest common hardwood they cultivated on their land.

The detection of the felling of 101 rosewood trees in Muttill South village in Wayanad district was just the tip of the iceberg.

Investigators said one cubic metre of rosewood cost ₹7 lakh in the black market. The price often accrued several-fold when the timber found its way to foreign markets. The mafia had exploited the economic downturn caused by the pandemic to convince farmers to sell the rosewood on their plots for a pittance, investigators said.

# More cases of tree felling emerge across State

K.S. SUDHI  
KOCHI

Fresh cases of suspected illegal felling of trees have emerged from across Kerala as the investigating teams are poring over official records and visiting the sites to ascertain the magnitude of loss.

Five investigation teams headed by Divisional Forest Officers of the Flying Squads were on the field on Sunday to cross-verify the permits issued for transporting the timber with the status of the holdings in which the felled trees were located.

Around 500 huge teak and rosewood trees were suspected to have been felled illegally from Thrissur district under the cover of the now-cancelled government order.

The trees were suspected to be illegally axed from Elanad, Pattikkad and Mannamangalam areas of Thrissur district. While most of the trees that were felled in Wayanad were seized, it is suspected that the trees that were cut down in Thrissur had crossed the borders of the State.

In Ernakulam, it is feared that around 100 huge teak trees that were located close to the Thattekad Bird Sanctuary were brought down. Around 40 permits were issued by the forest officials in Ernakulam for taking out the felled trees.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Vigilance and Forest Intelligence) has asked the investigating teams to submit report before June 22.

# Actor 'Sanchari' Vijay critical after accident

He undergoes brain surgery

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

National award-winning Kannada actor 'Sanchari' Vijay suffered severe head injuries in a motorcycle accident here on Saturday night and is critical.

The actor underwent brain surgery at Apollo Hospital, Bannerghatta Road, on Sunday. "He has suffered haemorrhage in the right part of the brain. He is yet to regain consciousness. Doctors said he will be under observation for the next 48 hours," said his friend and filmmaker Mansore.

On Saturday, Mr. Vijay and his friend Naveen were returning to the actor's



'Sanchari' Vijay

home on a motorcycle after distribution of food packets to the needy. Both were not wearing helmets.

Barely 100 metres from the apartment, the motorcycle skidded and both suffered severe injuries. Mr. Naveen, who was riding the motorcycle, too is critical.

# Probe reveals mass trafficking of women from Bangladesh

Bengaluru police uncover another prostitution racket

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

While investigating the gang rape and torture of a Bangladeshi woman in Bengaluru, the Ramamurthy Nagar police have unearthed another prostitution racket.

The rescued women told the police that they and "hundreds of other women" had been brought illegally from Bangladesh into India by traffickers.

During a recent raid, the police arrested four people and rescued seven women in Kanakanagar K. Channasandra, close to the police station. The police also res-

cued a five-year-old girl, believed to be the daughter of one of the women.

The arrest of the prime accused, Shobuj, helped the police uncover the prostitution racket. The women were allegedly brought to the country by the human trafficking gang that Shobuj is part of.

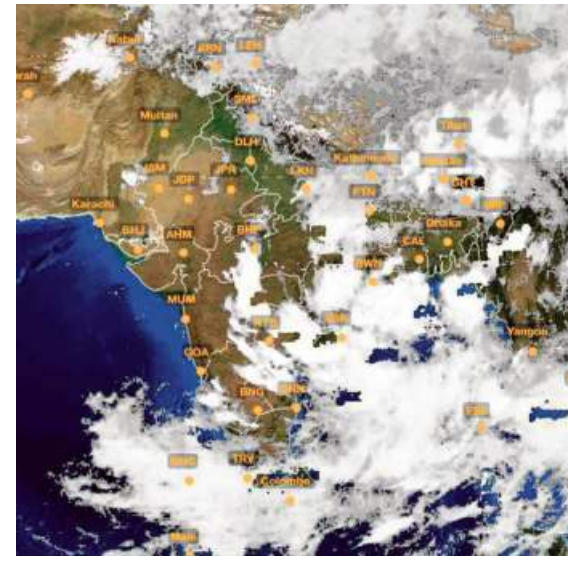
"They told us that they were among the hundreds of women who crossed the border illegally from Bangladesh into India a few months ago. They were assisted by one Rafiq Ashraf from Bangladesh who helped them evade the border se-

curity personnel. We believe he is part of the gang and operates from Bangladesh," said a senior police official.

After entering India, the women were taken to Howrah in West Bengal and kept there for a few days, while the traffickers allegedly organised identity proof documents. They were then sent to different cities. "The traffickers had promised them good jobs, but once they arrived at a city they were forced into prostitution. In Bengaluru, Shobuj and the others would retain a major share of what the women earned," said the official.

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 Monday:** Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty winds at isolated places very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Kerala and with lightning at isolated places over West Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	0.3	34.2	25.2	Kozhikode	0.1	28	23
Ahmedabad	0.3	40	29.3	Kurnool	0.1	34.7	25.3
Aizawl	0.3	26	22.1	Lucknow	0.1	29.9	26.5
Allahabad	0.3	34.8	26.7	Madurai	0.1	35.8	27.5
Bengaluru	3	27.6	20.2	Mangaluru	62	25.8	21.1
Bhopal	10	36.4	22.9	Mysuru	24	31.6	26
Bhubaneswar	17	28.6	25	New Delhi	0.1	34.8	20.6
Chandigarh	21	33.9	21.7	Patna	44	31.2	23.6
Chennai	2	37.1	26.7	Port Blair	2	30.9	25.9
Coimbatore	0.3	30.4	23	Puduchery	0.1	38.6	28
Dehradun	0.3	33.4	22.8	Pune	0.2	31.9	22
Gangtok	8	20.6	17.4	Raipur	20.3	33.3	25.2
Goa	28	30	23.8	Ranchi	37	29.2	22.6
Guwahati	2	35	26.5	Shillong	22	25.2	18
Hubballi	0.3	26	22	Shimla	9	26.5	16.4
Hyderabad	0.3	32.4	23.4	Srinagar	20.3	33.3	14.8
Imphal	1	30.1	20.5	Thiruvananthapuram	11	29.6	23.6
Jaipur	0.3	38.5	26	Tiruchi	0.1	35.1	27.6
Kochi	56	28.4	23.4	Vijayawada	0.1	34.2	27
Kohima	0.3	28.6	18.4	Visakhapatnam	0.1	34.2	27
Kolkata	0.3	33.7	27.9				

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	3	48	138	44	62	■
Bengaluru	10	10	20	61	48	■
Chennai	6	5	40	42	66	■
Delhi	19	15	26	51	124	■
Hyderabad	6	10	10	13	60	■
Kolkata	9	20	18	34	4	■
Lucknow	19	18	65	31	46	■
Mumbai	58	20	12	18	31	■
Pune	7	15	62	107	66	■
Visakhapatnam	0	0	0	0	0	■

(Readings indicate average AQI)

**SO<sub>2</sub>:** 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.

**NO<sub>2</sub>:** 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

# Stars to encourage jab in Nuh

Meo Muslim-dominated Haryana district is at the bottom of the vaccination table

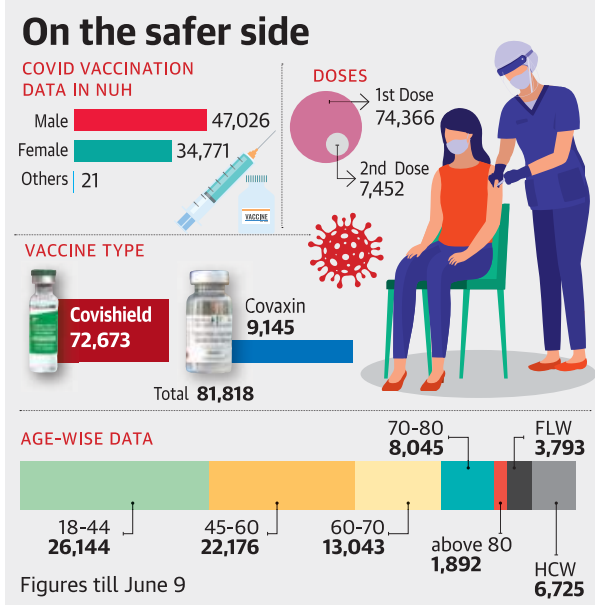
ASHOK KUMAR  
NUH

Nuh, a Meo Muslims-dominated district of Haryana, languishes at the bottom of the table for vaccination coverage in the State with administration of around 11% of the targeted doses so far against the State average of 16%.

To ramp up the numbers, the district authorities have now decided to rope in local "celebrities" — sportspersons, actors, and achievers — to dispel misgivings on the vaccine and encourage people's participation in the immunisation drive.

Conceding that the vaccination coverage in the district was far from satisfactory, Deputy Commissioner Capt. Shakti Singh said the authorities had taken several measures to encourage people to take part in the vaccination drive and had now decided to rope in local "celebrities".

He said these local "celebrities" could be sportspersons, actors, or even those who have cleared competitive exams and are trusted and looked upon with res-



pect. "Also, we want to rope in doctors belonging to the district even if they are settled outside to convince people to get vaccinated," said Capt. Singh.

The administration is also in talks with Indian Idol winner Salman Ali, a local, for this.

The recorded video message of these celebrities would be disseminated

through social media to influence the locals.

Only 81,818 vaccine doses were administered in the district till June 9, the lowest in the State.

Capt. Singh attributed the low vaccination coverage to "general distrust" among the locals about the welfare schemes initiated by the government, besides "misinformation campaign" against

the vaccination on social media and illiteracy. The administration also reached out to the masses through social and religious leaders and the results were encouraging, said Capt. Singh, adding that there was also a sense of fear among the people in the wake of the second wave and they were now willing to getting the jab.

The figures also showed almost ten fold increase in the vaccination data for the past two months compared with the first three months.

**60% above 18 years**  
District Immunisation Officer Basant Pandey said the district has an estimated 12 lakh local population and 60% of them were above 18 years.

Deputy Leader of the Congress Legislative Party and Nuh MLA Aftab Ahmed said poor health infrastructure had shaken the faith of the common man in the wake of the second wave and people had lost faith in the administration.

The report says that factors such as population density, open area ratio and hospital infrastructure are far more important than the distance from work or affordability to decide where a homebuyer wants to live during COVID-19.

The localities in Gurugram's East zone such as sectors 52-56, 58, 40-44, 30, 24-27 are found to be the most suitable for living as per the index.

# Woman killed by crocodile

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KENDRAPARA (ODISHA)

A fisherwoman died following an attack by a crocodile in close vicinity of Bhitarkanika National Park.

An estuarine crocodile attacked her while she was fishing in a creek at Vekta village under Rajnagar police station.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

We, Ramesh Verma, S/o Late Lachhi Ram, and Madhu Verma w/o Ramesh Verma R/o C-4/18 Acharya Niketan Mayur Vihar Phase 1 Delhi 110091 declares our son Ankur Verma and his wife Deepika Verma are out of our control. Due to their bad conduct we disown them from our movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with them at their risk and we are not responsible for their acts. We absolutely disallow them to take part in any rituals or ceremony whatsoever related to me and my wife in future.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

14.10.1931 11.6.2021  
**P. BASKER VEDAMANIKAM**  
Albuquerque, NM USA  
Basker Vedamanikam passed away peacefully in his sleep at 1:00 am on June 11, 2021 at Albuquerque, USA.  
Survived by his wife Ravimati, sons Ranjan, Vijayan, Chandran and Maran, as well as by 2 younger brothers Victor and Ponnun, and many grandchildren.  
Funeral Service at on Monday, June 14, 2021, at the Las Cruces Church of God, NM, USA.  
Funeral live stream on www.getzfuneralhome.com as well as on Facebook @LasCrucesCOG on 15 June @ 1:30 am IST

OBITUARY

In loving memory of **Smt G Alamelu** (Retired Teacher Lady Willingdon Higher Secondary School) who passed away on 16-3-2021 and **Shri R Sundaram** (Retired S.E., PWD, Tamil Nadu) who passed away on 2.6.2021. Missed by their son Raghavan, Kavita and family, daughter Vathsala, Sudharsanam and family. Mob.: 91-9789823790.

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## Origin unclear

China's cooperation in identifying the source of the coronavirus is vital

Over 17 months after WHO first reported a cluster of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan, China, scientists are yet to determine with certainty how the SARS-CoV-2 virus emerged. Much like other viruses, SARS-CoV-2 too could have a natural origin or somehow escaped from the coronavirus research lab in Wuhan, the epicentre of the COVID-19 outbreak. With no hard scientific evidence available to confirm the lab leak hypothesis, there are some scientific leads that support a natural origin. If it is a zoonotic spillover, the virus could have either directly crossed over from bats to humans or through an intermediate host. But till date, neither the bat species that hosts the SARS-CoV-2 virus nor the intermediate host has been found. China's secrecy and delay in reporting the Wuhan outbreak and in finding the natural host or the intermediary have further fuelled the lab spillover hypothesis. Finding the host animal can be daunting. While the civet cat and dromedary camel were quickly identified to be the intermediate hosts of SARS and MERS, respectively, it took years to identify the horseshoe bat that harbours SARS virus strains. To date, a complete Ebola virus has never been isolated from an animal source.

If the virus had been bioengineered, the genome sequence would carry tell-tale signs. But scientists have not found any signature of genetic manipulation. While a particular site (furan cleavage) on the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein that allows the virus to infect the cells has been cited as evidence of bioengineering, the fact is that it is not unique to SARS-CoV-2. A combination of nucleotides in the furin cleavage site that encode for a particular amino acid – another feature that is forwarded as supporting laboratory manipulation – too has been shown to be not unique. For instance, the nucleotide combination encoding for the amino acid is present in other sites of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and in the 2003 SARS virus. The possibility of SARS-CoV-2 evolving via cell culture appears bleak as scientists have found the virus losing features key to transmission and virulence unless cultured using new methods. Reports of three Wuhan lab researchers falling ill in November 2019 by itself does not prove a lab leak hypothesis. There is no evidence that they were infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and even if they were, it is necessary to prove that it happened from inside the lab. In the absence of conclusive evidence to support either hypothesis so far, a thorough investigation is needed. While the inquiry by the U.S. intelligence might provide clues, a scientific investigation is more likely to help reach closure; China's cooperation, therefore, becomes vital and politicising the virus origin is not going to help.

## Renewed uncertainty

A near-term revival in consumption-led demand appears bleak now

The latest factory output data released by the National Statistical Office is yet another sign of the rocky start that the economy is having in the new fiscal year. April's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) estimates show all three sectoral constituents of the index – mining, manufacturing and electricity – suffered reverses, as output slid below the preceding month's levels. With the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic increasing in intensity that month and several key industrial hubs coming under renewed local lockdowns, all six end-use categories – primary, capital, intermediate and construction goods and consumer durables and non-durables – endured month-on-month contractions. Manufacturing, which accounts for 77.6% of the IIP, saw production shrink 12.6% from March, and contributed significantly to a 13% sequential contraction in overall industrial output. The NSO advised against drawing a year-on-year comparison, which it said would be affected by the fact that the nationwide lockdown had prevented many establishments from operating in April 2020. Figures from April 2019 indicate the IIP registered a marginal 0.08% growth, aided by a 6.8% increase in electricity output from two years earlier. However, from the pre-pandemic level, manufacturing shrank 0.9%, reflecting the deep rut it finds itself in. Output of capital goods and consumer durables also lagged the corresponding 2019 levels by 14.3% and 11.6%, respectively, signalling that the outlook for investment in production capacity and discretionary consumption remains disconcertingly weak.

Consumer non-durables, comprising household essentials, witnessed an almost 11% contraction from March, testifying to the demand destruction that has accompanied the second wave. To be sure, the IIP arrives with a lag of six weeks and may likely be viewed as more of an indicator of past economic activity than as a tool to assist in providing an accurate prognosis. Still, other data from May, including manufacturing and services PMI and retail automobile sales, underline the extent to which economic activity has been constrained since the start of this quarter. With IHS Markit's surveys showing manufacturing stagnating last month and services contracting for the first time in eight months, the Composite PMI Output Index slid from 55.4 in April to 48.1 in May indicating a moderate reduction in activity. New vehicle registrations more than halved in May from the previous month, another tell-tale sign of the demand drought. With job losses accelerating, and consumer spending hit by a combination of falling real incomes, depleted savings and increasing health-care costs, the broader outlook for a near-term revival in consumption-led demand appears bleak right now. To ensure an abiding recovery, the government needs to expedite targeted, demand-creating fiscal support measures and drastically quicken the pace of vaccinations.

# The world is hardly wired for cyber resilience

Defending civilian targets and infrastructure against rising cyberattacks will stretch the capability of governments



M.K. NARAYANAN

A string of high-profile cyberattacks in recent months has exposed vulnerabilities in the critical infrastructure of even advanced nations. This has reinforced the need for improved defences against actual, and potential, cyberattacks by all countries across continents.

### America under attack

Several high-profile cyberattacks were reported from the United States during the past several months. Towards the end of 2020, for instance, a major cyberattack headlined 'SolarWinds' – and believed to have been sponsored from Russia – had rocked the U.S. It involved data breaches across several wings of the U.S. government, including defence, energy and state. Before the U.S. could even recover from this breach, thousands of U.S. organisations were hacked in early 2021 in an unusually aggressive cyberattack, by a Chinese group Hafnium, which had exploited serious flaws in Microsoft's software, thus gaining remote control over affected systems.

In quick succession, thereafter, the U.S. has witnessed three more major attacks: an audacious ransomware attack by Russia/East Europe-based cybercriminals, styled DarkSide, on Colonial Pipeline (which is the main supplier of oil to the U.S. East Coast), compelling the company to temporarily shut down operations. The siege was lifted after Colonial Pipeline paid out several million dollars as ransom to unlock its computers and release its files. There are reports of the ransom being received in bitcoins which was later seized by the U.S. government. Another Russia-backed group, Nobellium, next launched a phishing attack on 3,000 e-mail accounts, targeting USAID and several other organisations. Early this month, JBS SA, the U.S. subsidiary of a Brazilian meat

processing company, was the target of a ransomware attack; the company also paid a ransom in millions.

### Now, civilian targets

These attacks were all primarily on civilian targets, though each one was of critical importance. Obviously cyber, which is often referred to as the fifth domain/dimension of warfare, is now largely being employed against civilian targets, bringing the war into our homes. Most nations have been concentrating till date mainly on erecting cyber defences to protect military and strategic targets, but this will now need to change. The obsession of military cyber planners has been to erect defences against software vulnerabilities referred to as 'Zero-day', that had the capability to cripple a system and could lie undetected for a long time. (The most celebrated Zero-day software of this kind to date is Stuxnet, which almost crippled Iran's uranium enrichment programme some years back). Today, other Zero-day software, no doubt exist, though little is known about them. What is, however, evident is that a whole new market currently exists for Zero day software outside the military domain, and the world must prepare for this eventuality.

Defending civilian targets, and more so critical infrastructure, against cyberattacks such as ransomware and phishing, including spear phishing, apart from unknown Zero day software, is almost certain to stretch the capability and resources of governments across the globe, somewhat in the manner that nations have been forced to find the resources and the methods to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. One related problem is that the distinction between military and civilian targets is increasingly getting erased and the consequences of this could be indeterminate. For instance, the 2012 cyberattack on Aramco, employing the Shamoon virus, which wiped out the memories of 30,000 computers of the Saudi Aramco Oil Corporation, has ever since been one reason for the very frosty relations between different countries in West Asia and the Gulf



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region. Cyber warfare is replete with several damaging methodologies. In the civilian domain, two key manifestations of the 'cat and mouse game' of cyber warfare today, are ransomware and phishing, including spear phishing. Ransomware attacks have skyrocketed, with demands and payments going into multi-millions of dollars. India figures prominently in this list, being one of the most affected. Also experts believe that of late, the recovery cost from the impact of a ransomware attack – in India, for example, has tripled – and mid-sized companies, in particular, today face a catastrophic situation, if attacked, and may even have to cease operations. Thus, the need to be aware of the nature of the cyber threat to their businesses and take adequate precautionary measures, has become extremely vital. Banking and financial services were most prone to ransomware attacks till date, but oil, electricity grids, and lately, health care, have begun to figure prominently.

### Zeroing in on health care

What is specially worrisome at this time, when a pandemic is raging, is the number of cyberattacks on health-care systems. With data becoming a vital element in today's world, personal information has become a vital commodity. One of the more vulnerable areas where data tends to be linked to a specific individual is in health care. Compromised 'health information' is proving to be a vital commodity for use by cybercriminals. All indications are that cybercriminals are increasingly targeting a nation's health-care system and trying to gain access to patients' data. The available data aggravates the risk not only to the individual but also

to entire communities.

It would be a mistake to believe that we can hope for a respite from cyberattacks such as ransomware and phishing. Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated, and are now engaged in stealing sensitive data in targeted computers before launching a ransomware attack. This is resulting in a kind of 'double jeopardy' for the targeted victim. Also, today's cybercriminals, specially those specialising in ransomware and similar attacks, are different from the ordinary run-of-the-mill criminals. Many are known to practise 'reverse engineering' and employ 'penetration testers' to probe high secure networks.

The bad news is that the cyber landscape is poised to undergo more fundamental changes. Motivations for cyberattacks vary: for (some) nation states, the motivation is geopolitical transformation; for cybercriminals, it is increased profits; for terror groups, the motivation remains much the same, but the risk factor may be lower. However, it is 'insider threats' – due to discontent with the management or for personal reasons – that could well become an omnipotent reality.

### Need for data protection

Cybersecurity essentially hinges on data protection. As data becomes the world's most precious commodity, attacks on data and data systems are bound to intensify. Reportedly, we create more than three quintillion bytes of data everyday (some put it at over 2.5 quintillion) – with several billion devices interconnected to billions of end point devices exchanging petabytes of sensitive data, on the network. This is only bound to grow. Ensuring data protection could, hence, prove to be a rather thankless task, complicating the lives of Information and other security professionals.

The data life cycle can broadly be classified into data at rest (when it is being created and stored), data in motion (when it is being transmitted across insecure and uncontrolled networks), and data in use (when it is being consumed). Constant exposure lends itself to ever increasing data thefts

and abuse. With mobile and cloud computing expanding rapidly, and also given the nature of the on-going pandemic, cybersecurity professionals are now engaged in building a 'Zero Trust Based Environment', viz., zero trust on end point devices, zero trust on identity, and zero trust on the network to protect all sensitive data. What is of interest is that there do exist quite a few niche companies today, which have developed (or are developing) newer technologies to create a Zero Trust Based environment employing: software defined solutions for agile perimeter security, secure gateways, cloud access security, privileged access management, threat intelligence platforms, static and dynamic data masking, etc. The moot point is whether not only those in authority but even more so those in the world of business, (specially oil and finance, and specifically health care) are aware of this – and, more important, are ready to utilise these technologies – to ward-off a cyberattack and safeguard their data.

### Preparation is needed

Building deep technology in cyber is essential. New technologies such as artificial intelligence, Machine learning and quantum computing, also present new opportunities. Nations that are adequately prepared – conceptually and technologically – and have made rapid progress in artificial intelligence and quantum computing and the like will have a clear advantage over states that lag behind in these fields. Pressure also needs to be put on officials in the public domain, as also company boards, to carry out regular vulnerability assessments and create necessary awareness of the growing cyber threat. In the end, it might be appropriate to quote IBM Chairman, Arvind Krishna, that cybersecurity will be "the pressing issue of this decade" and that "value lies in the data and people are going to come after that data".

M.K. Narayanan, currently Executive Chairman of CyQureX Pvt. Ltd., a U.K.-U.S.A. cybersecurity joint venture, is a former National Security Adviser and a former Governor of West Bengal

# Higher education in Kerala needs a new chapter

There are many tasks the LDF government must take note of in its focus to transform the State into a knowledge society



M.A. OOMMEN

The recent election manifesto of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government of Kerala opens with the assertion, "we are entering a new phase in rebuilding Kerala" and promises to usher in a "sustainable development model". Higher education is undoubtedly the critical dynamic to trigger creative transformation in a society. The Budget speech on January 15, 2021 (the last Budget of the previous government) and the revised Budget speech on June 4, (first Budget of the new government) in the Legislative Assembly reiterate the government's resolve "to rapidly transform" Kerala into a knowledge economy and society. The new Budget announced that the government will appoint a high power commission "to examine" and "reorganize" the education system of the State. Restructuring higher education is a much-needed step in Kerala's transformation into a knowledge society.

I raise three issues for discussion: decades of unplanned linear expansion; declining quality and compromise with mediocrity, and widening inequality in economic and social opportunities.

### Expansion of colleges

One, the linear expansion of arts and science colleges and even professional colleges independent of the needs of the economy especially during the last 30 years coin-

cides with the accelerated flow of foreign remittance since the economic reforms of 1991. With no prudent policy to channelise these resources for productive purposes, education proved to be a lucrative investment candidate for many including powerful social groups. Following the direct payment agreement with aided private colleges in September 1972, the State took the responsibility of paying the salaries of teachers and non-teaching staff besides providing maintenance grants. With no effective social control on teacher appointments, donations, capitation fees and several corrupt practices increased, vitiating the academic environment and goals. Arts and science colleges affiliated to universities increased from 172 in 1991 to 958 in 2020, a 5.5 times growth. Of these, 476, or nearly 50%, are self-financing colleges.

Instructively, out of the 1.37 lakh students enrolled in these colleges for B.A. courses, english, economics and history alone account for 61% of the total enrolment in 2020. Again, 69% of the M.A. courses are in these three subjects. Similarly for B.Sc. courses, mathematics and physics alone account for 41.3% of the 1.05 lakh students enrolled. Over 40% of those who are enrolled for M.Sc., take these two subjects. These linear reproductions could be the expression of the helplessness of a student community with no alternative options before them.

Can we confidently say that higher education in Kerala fulfils the dreams of the youth to become great scientists, entrepreneurs, economists, scholars and others? This does not ignore the fact that student politics has groomed a generation of proven political



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

leaders.

### Relevance and quality

Two, the linear reproduction of traditional courses in the universities raises the foundational question of relevance and quality. Surprisingly, no political party posited this issue as important. No one probably wants Kerala among the top 100 universities of the world or entertain such high hopes. Indeed, higher education has an important instrumental and intrinsic role to play. Equipped with no life-skills or employability capabilities, the rapid progression of higher education can only swell the ranks of the unemployed. The expansion of liberal arts and sciences has not significantly promoted better public reasoning, open-ended discussions, better gender-justice and nourished high democratic values.

All branches of higher education including technical education now work on a self-financing mode. In Kerala, there are only 19 autonomous colleges. There is opposition from teachers and students to this idea. A good autonomous educational institution demands high quality curriculum, syllabus, pedagogy and research. As the first professor (1976-80) at the Dr. John Matthai Centre of the Calicut University, I can confidently testify that dedicated team work with a well-designed curriculum

and syllabus, exercise book, project work, seminars, objective internal assessment and student evaluation can produce outstanding students. How the project was abandoned can provide many lessons. Mediocrity can never be the essence of change. Today, that 26% of teachers in the arts and science colleges of Kerala fall in the category of 'guest lecturers' is only an affirmation of mediocrity. Mending and reforming the current situation are a great challenge.

The present government has announced a target to double the gross enrolment ratio (18-23) from 37% at present to 75% in the next five years. This is a goal to be pursued with great planning. Many a rich and middle class of Kerala (including non-resident Indians) send their wards outside. Given the powerful vested interests in the educational set up and the disorientation that exists, a critique of the epistemological foundations of the existing model is a desideratum.

### Issue of commercialisation

Three, the growing commercialisation of education in Kerala has deeply eroded the State's egalitarian narratives of the past and weakened the scope for enhancing equality of opportunity. The growing inequality in the distribution of assets, income and consumption of households in Kerala (a well-documented phenomenon) has considerably exacerbated the situation of the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), fisher folk, plantation labour and other vulnerable groups. The self-financing colleges in engineering, medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy colleges have virtually priced out a

sizeable proportion of these categories. The growing digital divide under the pandemic dispensation affects these groups more than others. The SC/STs who did not significantly participate in the Gulf-boom face the double whammy of marginalisation.

**Women's unemployment rate** Kerala can take pride in the fact that out of the 3.32 lakh students in the arts and science colleges in 2019-20, 67.7% are girls and 57.2% of the teachers are women. Even so, the labour force participation rate is low and the unemployment rate of women is very high in Kerala. For example, according to the periodic labour force survey (2018-19) of the Government of India, the unemployment rate among females in rural Kerala (15-29 years) is 57.8% as against 13.8% in India as a whole. Judging from the larger perspective of democracy and social justice, Kerala's women do not play a critical agency role in the transformation of its economy, society and polity.

To conclude, the Revised Budget reaffirms the resolve of the present government to build a new Kerala, based on a knowledge society. Several steps such as K-FON (Kerala Fibre Optic Network), the K-DISC (Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council), Knowledge Economy Mission and many others in the pipeline demand dedicated teamwork. Collective rethinking of all stakeholders, academics and policy decision makers is a critical need.

M.A. Oommen is Honorary Fellow, Centre for Development Studies and Distinguished Professor, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Thiruvananthapuram

## 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.

### Lessons from Bengal

In the wake of the massive win by the Trinamool Congress party in West Bengal, a lot of its rebel leaders who had earlier switched to the BJP, are returning to the TMC. This may not be new to our politics, but now party

workers of the BJP are openly expressing their disillusionment. Clearly, the theme of pushing neo-nationalism too far is touching a raw chord in the age-old socio-political sentiments lying deep in the State. The recent election results in Kerala

and Tamil Nadu were seen to be in a similar vein. Ardent majoritarian-driven nationalism begets short-term political gains but proves counter-productive for socio-economic stability in the long term. The BJP should realise that true nationalism is best

nurtured through constructive federalism.  
R. NARAYANAN,  
Navi Mumbai

### Reduction, no waiver

One is at a loss to understand the rationale behind just reducing, and not waiving, the GST on

relief goods needed to fight the pandemic. It shocks one's conscience to find that even electric furnaces in crematoriums could not merit a complete scrapping of the GST on them; what is it if not revenue consideration coming first? Likewise, the decision to

continue to tax ambulances leaves much to be desired. If not now, when is a more right time for the GST Council to provide succour to hapless people?

S. SANJEEVI RAO,  
Puducherry



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# Planning for a biosecure future

COVID-19 has further highlighted the biosecurity concerns of synthetic biology



HAPPYMON JACOB

COVID-19 has made it clear that our traditional imagination of national security is no longer credible. The preparedness of nation states and tenuous global security arrangements were insufficient in dealing with the crisis. The future of national security studies, therefore, will be forced to undergo a paradigm shift if it must retain any policy impact at all — it would need to rethink the sources of insecurity, to begin with. The growth of exponential technologies such as synthetic biology, artificial intelligence and nanotechnology is bound to change the theory and practice of national security. COVID-19 has quickened the inevitable.

Among the exponential technologies shaping the world today, the biological revolution is of exceptional importance. The rapid rise of synthetic biology in the last two decades and its still-to-be-understood implications haven't received sufficient attention from the security studies or policy communities. COVID-19 has further highlighted the biosecurity concerns of synthetic biology. The argument is not that COVID-19 originated in a lab, but that dangerous bio-weapons can come from labs.

## Synthetic biology

That new organisms, biological parts and devices can be created or that existing natural life forms can be re-designed should ideally be the subject matter for scientists to concern themselves with or for ethicists to debate. But today, there is a growing realisation that exponential technologies have hitherto unforeseen national and global security implications. In 2014, for instance, the U.S. Department of Defense categorised synthetic biology as one of the six 'disruptive basic research areas' even though linkage between national security and synthetic biology is yet to become an agenda item in mainstream national security debates.

Synthetic biology is a revolutionary technology which can help us manipulate biological organisms and processes for human betterment, especially in treating diseases, by re-



ISTOCK PHOTO

engineering cells. But it is a double-edged sword. There are many risks associated with the technology which must be addressed before it becomes widely accessible. For one, there is the possibility of deliberate misuse. While the technology is still not easily accessible, the day is not far off when such technologies won't be difficult to access. There is a need to carefully review, especially in the wake of the pandemic, the biosecurity systems in place where such technologies are in use. Accidental leaks of experimental pathogens are another concern. Insufficiently trained staff, inadequately safeguarded facilities, and lack of proper protocols could all be behind such leaks. The reality is that there has been very little focus on threats emanating from biological sources. Contrast this with the focus on nuclear weapons, facilities and material. Not only are they tightly controlled but are also the subject of strong global regimes. This is despite the fact that a well-orchestrated biological attack could have serious implications even though it would be less 'spectacular' since its effects are less immediate. This was before synthetic biology came into play. A well-planned attack using highly infectious pathogens synthetically engineered in a lab could be disastrous.

What if such attacks are contemplated and carried out by state actors against adversaries? How easy would it be to pin responsibility on a specific actor if the incubation period is high and the pathogen can be modified to hide its origin? Unlike the nuclear domain, the fields of biology or synthetic biology are not regulated internationally despite growing military interest in synthetic biology applications and their potential misuse. The 'weapon of mass destruction'

(WMD) capability of bio-weapons has been long recognised but very little has been done by the international community about it. Of the three types of WMD, nuclear weapons have received the maximum safety and security attention given the treaty and institutional arrangements associated with it. Chemical weapons come next. There is an international convention and an implementing body. The BTWC does not have a verification clause, nor does it have clearly laid down rules and procedures to guide research in this field.

The dilemma is evident in Article 1 of the BTWC itself which bans "mining or other biological agents, or toxins, whatever their origin or method of production" that "have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes". In other words, while bio-weapons are banned, research for medical and bio-defence purposes are allowed. While this is understandable, the problem is that there is a thin line between bio-defence research and bio-weapons research. Since bio-defence research routinely uses pathogens and toxins for experimental purposes, processes, know-how and outcomes of bio-defence research could potentially be used to create bio-weapons, especially with the new advancements in synthetic biology. More so as the pharmaceutical industry has vehemently opposed any intrusive inspection regime.

An Ad Hoc Group set up in 1994 to negotiate a Protocol to enhance the transparency of treaty-relevant biological facilities and activities to help deter violations of the BTWC submitted a report at the Fifth BTWC Re-

view Conference in 2001 but was not accepted by the member states. The initiative has since been shelved.

Pandemics have also highlighted that the traditional distinction at the international institutional level between biological weapons (a field governed by the BTWC) and diseases (a domain under the World Health Organization) may not be useful anymore. There needs to be more conversation between health specialists and bio-weapons/defence specialists.

The November 2021 BTWC review conference must take stock of the advances in the field, address the thinning line between biotechnology research and bio-weapons research, and consider international measures for monitoring and verification.

## India uniquely unprepared

India is at a uniquely disadvantaged position compared to the more developed countries in this area given poor disease surveillance, insufficient coordination among various government departments dealing with biosecurity issues, and the pathetic state of the healthcare system.

India has multiple institutions dealing with biosafety and biosecurity threats but there is no coordination among them. For instance, implementation of biosafety guidelines is the responsibility of the Science and Technology Ministry and the Environment Ministry. However, labs dealing with biological research are set up under the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, which are under the Ministries of Health and Agriculture, respectively.

This highlights two issues pertaining directly to biosecurity. One, the multiplicity of bodies and ministers makes coordination difficult, especially in the absence of an empowered coordinating body. Two, given the rising risk of diseases of zoonotic origin, the traditional ministry-wise separation might not be useful. Another important question is whether India, with its porous borders and ill-trained border control institutions, is prepared for defending against pathogens or dangerous biological organisms or agents arriving from abroad. COVID-19 should serve as a wake-up call.

Happyymon Jacob is Associate Professor at the School of International Studies, JNU

## FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

# Censorship by noise

The act of delegitimising professional journalism undermines news media's status as the fourth estate



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

For nearly two decades, I have been concurrently looking at the annual Reuters Memorial Lecture delivered at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford, and the Pulitzer Prizes for journalism administered by Columbia University. While the prizes represent the best practices in informing the public, the lecture deals with "a critical issue facing the news industry" and is delivered by "someone at the highest level of journalism". The concurrent reading, in a sense, becomes a form of SWOT analysis. The lectures and prizes give insights into the current status of journalism and provide valuable clues on navigating its choppy waters.

## The vulnerability of journalism

It is disheartening to record that this year, both the Reuters Memorial Lecture and the Pulitzer Prizes have become veritable documents of the vulnerability of journalism. In April 2020, Nadja Drost wrote a long-form report in *The California Sunday Magazine* titled "When can we really rest?" It was on migrants crossing the Colombia-Panama border, which is said to be one of the most dangerous journeys in the world, to reach the U.S. On June 11, 2021, Ms. Drost, a freelance writer, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing for her article, which the Pulitzer committee described as "a brave and gripping account of global migration that documents a group's journey on foot through the Darien Gap, one of the most dangerous migrant routes in the world".

The tragedy is that *The California Sunday Magazine* no longer exists. Last June, it stopped its print edition. And as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to take its toll, the magazine stopped publishing online and posting on social media at the end of September. Kristen Hare of Poynter pointed out the historic significance of this development. She wrote: "At least in the last 10 years, this is the first example we can find of a publication closing before it won a Pulitzer." She also pointed out that in the U.S., during the pandemic, more than 75 newsrooms closed, including some that were more than 100 years old. This pandemic-induced bloodbath in journalism is evident in India too.

If the Pulitzer Prize has gone to a defunct

publication that was dedicated to long-form journalism, the Reuters Memorial Lecture brought out the multiple pressures faced by journalists in pursuing their vocation in a free and independent manner. On June 8, Brazilian journalist Patricia Campos Mello delivered the annual lecture drawing from her series of investigative pieces on the rise of disinformation in Brazil. While the focus of her talk was Brazil, it is impossible not to draw parallels with what we are witnessing in India. She said: "Lies are the foundation of the health tragedy we are going through and lies are the cornerstone of our incoming political disaster. Professional journalism is one of the last barriers against the collapse of democracy in Brazil and in many other countries struggling with an avalanche of lies. Meticulously checked information, careful and balanced reporting, and in-depth investigations are the only hope to bring back reality to many countries where facts became malleable and often secondary to opinions and beliefs."

## Fudging data

This is true in India too. We have seen gross under-reporting of the rate of COVID-19 infections and mortality. We have seen numbers, including on the availability of vaccines, being fudged. We are in an unenviable position where the Union government has issued a directive asking the States not to divulge the details about the vaccine stock in hand as these details are "sensitive information".

Ms. Mello pointed out that today, the muzzling of the press has taken on a different hue. She called it "censorship by noise and defamation". It is a trait that has been normalised in India. She said: "Censorship, in this new world, doesn't require the suppression of information. On the one hand, populist leaders flood social media, messaging apps, and the internet in general with the version of facts they want to prevail — so that it drowns out investigations and negative news. It's the so-called censorship by noise. Then, for that manipulation of public opinion to succeed, these digital populist leaders need to delegitimise professional journalism."

The act of delegitimising professional journalism undermines news media's status as the fourth estate and denies it the crucial watchdog role. This blatant institutional capture not only ruptures our democratic fabric but also irreparably damages it.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

# Biden's Manichean vision

Dividing the world into democratic and autocratic camps is unrealistic

SREERAM CHAULIA

The G7 summit in Cornwall, U.K., was noteworthy for the cohesive vibe among member states, buttressed by their shared identity of being democracies. After four years of irrelevance wrought by the illiberal former U.S. President, Donald Trump, this club of rich, industrialised countries has got a new lease of life under his liberal successor, Joe Biden, who believes that democracies should unite against authoritarian rivals.

In Mr. Biden's Manichean vision, the world is at an "inflection point between those who argue that autocracy is the best way forward and those who understand that democracy is essential". Disproving the "false narrative" that dictatorships are faster and more efficient, and refuting autocrats who claim that the age of democracy is over, are the driving forces of Mr. Biden's foreign policy.

At the Cornwall summit, his non-confrontational approach to his G7 counterparts signalled democracies can manage their differences, team up multilaterally and push back the influence and muscle-flexing of China and Russia.

## An expanded coalition

To make sure that the messaging about team-building by democracies went across, the host of the Cornwall summit, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, invited four other democracies as guest participants — Australia, India, South Korea and South Africa. The combination of the G7 and the first three of these invitees has drawn attention to an expanded 'DIO' coalition of democracies. Mr. Biden's Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, Kurt Campbell, promotes DIO as a necessary instrument to "bridge European and regional (Asian) approaches to Chinese challenges."

Since Japan is the only democracy from Asia within the G7, forging a DIO with Australia, India and South Korea could corral the U.S.'s European and Indo-Pacific allies to present a transcontinental counterweight to China. A 78-year-old who built his career in American politics during the Cold War, Mr. Biden carries the liberal memories of that period when the U.S.

mobilised allies across continents to beat back the Soviet Union.

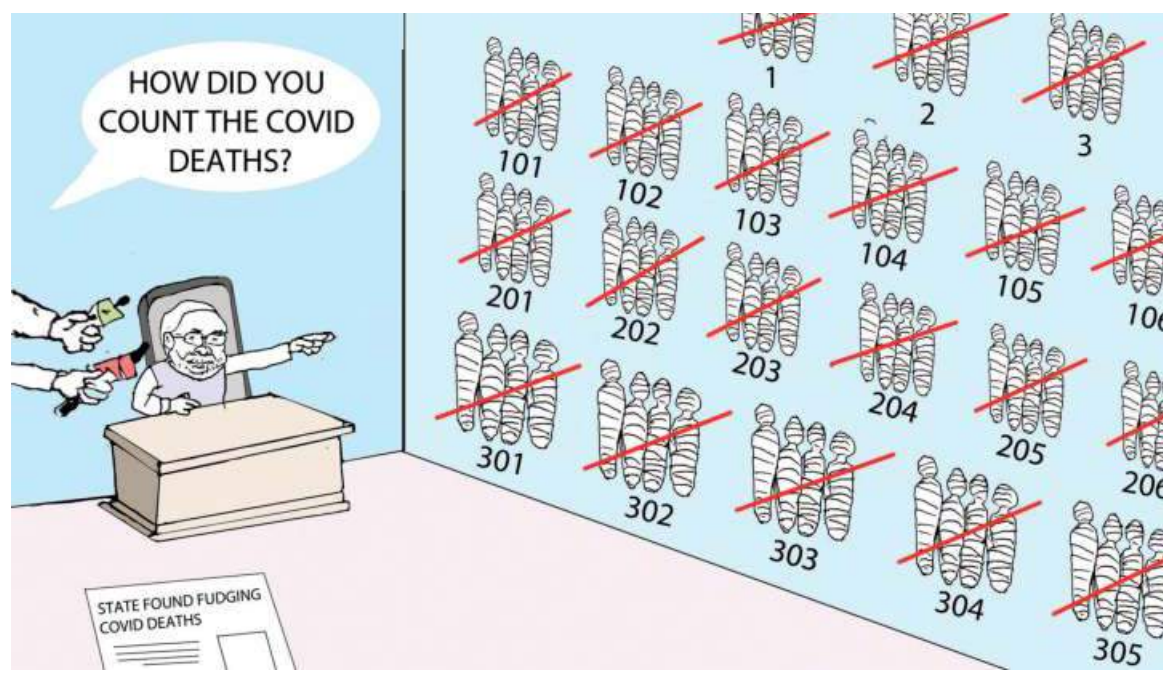
## Interdependent links

But what is different with today's 'new Cold War' is that power is more diffused around the world and economic interdependence transcends a neat division of the world into black (dictatorships) and white (democracies). For example, despite being a U.S. ally and a democracy, South Korea is wary of joining a formal DIO or Quad-plus alliance because its economy is interwoven with that of China.

India, which has been wooing the Europeans to bring their economic and military heft to the Indo-Pacific, would be happy to see a combined trans-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific formation like DIO that could counter-balance Chinese hegemony. But it cannot afford to alienate friendly non-democratic powers like Vietnam, Iran or Russia, all of which are vectors for India's ambitions of becoming a 'leading power' in the world. And for that matter, the Americans and Europeans are themselves not undiluted upholders of democracy. The U.S.'s allies in West Asia remain notoriously authoritarian, and European countries still cultivate client dictatorships in Africa.

As every democratic power has some authoritarian partners, should the Biden-led pitch for a "summit of democracies" and "contest with autocracies worldwide" be treated as hypocritical rhetoric? Politics is the art of the possible and so is geopolitics. The G7 and DIO are not idealistic alliances to spread democracy everywhere. They have to be selective in targeting adversaries and strike a balance among moral values, geo-strategic needs, and the complexities of the present multipolar world order. To the extent that cementing relationships with the principle of democracy helps corner specific undemocratic foes, there is a practical utility to DIO. But these concepts cannot metastasise into rigid structures waging holy war between good and evil. Navigating ambiguities with nuanced policies is the key.

Sreeram Chaulia is a Professor and Dean at the Jindal School of International Affairs



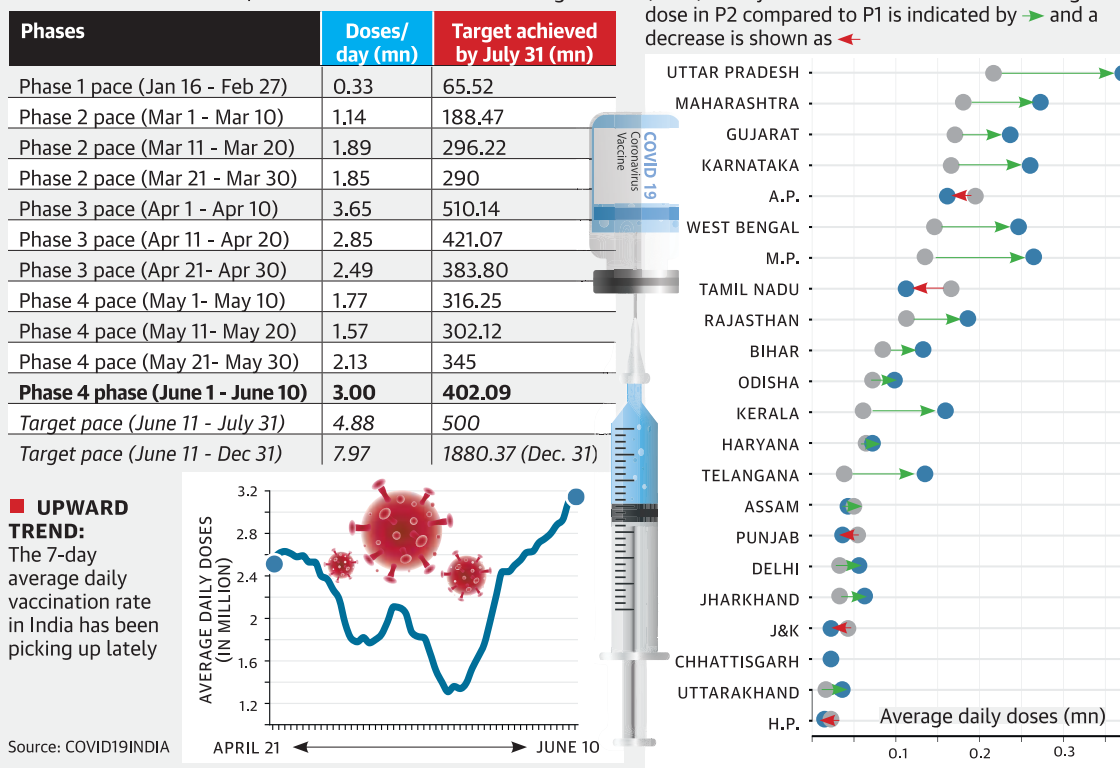
## DATA POINT

### Not quick enough

The average daily COVID-19 vaccination rate in the first 10 days of June was relatively higher than the levels recorded initially in May after India opened up inoculation for all adults. However, it continued to be lower than the levels registered in the first 10 days of April. While it picked up for most major States in the first 10 days of June compared to the last 10 days of May, it fell in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. To fully vaccinate all adults by the end of 2021, nearly eight million doses need to be given daily on average. **By The Hindu Data Team**

**DEGREE OF DROP** | From June 1 to 10, 3 mn average daily doses were administered. At the current rate, by July 31, around 403 mn doses can be administered, about 100 mn lower than the target

**STATE OF PLAY** | The chart shows average daily doses administered in May 21-30 (P1) and June 1-10 (P2) in major States. An increase in the average daily dose in P2 compared to P1 is indicated by ▲ and a decrease is shown as ▼



## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 14, 1971

## 5 cigarette units in public sector likely

Cigarette units will come up in public sector if proposals recently cleared by the Industrial Development Ministry go through [New Delhi, June 13]. As many as five State industrial development corporations have been issued letters of intent to open cigarette factories and these are to be located in Tamil Nadu, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and Haryana. Besides these an application from Madhya Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation is under consideration. Barring Assam, the other States have proposed units with an annual production capacity of 4,500 million pieces each. Assam has proposed a unit with 3,000 million pieces capacity. Within a span of six months, letters of intent have been issued for eleven new units and for the expansion of one of the existing units of National Tobacco Company. Of the eleven new units, five are in the State sector and six in the private sector.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 14, 1921

## British agriculture

London, June 9 - The decision to decontrol agriculture has caused great consternation amongst the agricultural community. The Farmers' Union objects to the disorganisation which will be caused by the repeal of the Act which only came into operation on January 1st while the prospect of lower wages owing to the dropping of minimum pay which is now 46 to 50 shillings per week and also longer hours, is causing great concern amongst labourers. It is generally agreed that prewar employment conditions must not return. Nevertheless, the outlook in agriculture is far from bright and the present marked tendency to turn ploughland into grass complicates the position for labourers who already demands. The suggestion which was made that the difficulties ahead could be tidied over, if the workers were to agree to increased hours without extra pay, has been abandoned as impracticable as also the idea of applying Factory Union rates. The Press points out that the Cabinet in arriving at a decision had to consider the Dominion's wheatlands and dairy farms and maintains that the whole edifice of the Empire stands upon food production and the consumption of Britain and that while British farm worker plays a very necessary part in the Empire's responsibility, he is by no means a leading actor.



FROM PAGE ONE

## China strengthening base along the LAC

On the disengagement situation in the Pangong Tso area, two officials said both sides had agreed to and have actually disengaged from the Finger areas on the north bank, but added that it was only disengaged and not de-induction.

Most Chinese deployment had just shifted back to the rear areas, one of the officials said.

Both sides have also emptied the heights of the Kailash ranges on the south bank where the Indian Army was in an advantageous position after decades due to the operation by the Special Frontier Force (SFF) in the end of August pre-empting Chinese moves to occupy them.

### No progress

However, there has been no progress in the talks for disengagement at Gogra and Hotsprings as well as in Demchok and the strategic Depsang Valley.

There was no change in the ground situation since the disengagement at Pangong Tso and the situation is quiet, the second official said.

In the first combat fatalities in 45 years, 20 Indian soldiers were killed in the violent clash after they were attacked by Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley on the

night of June 15, 2020, during a "de-escalation" process after a month-long stand-off between the troops at several points in eastern Ladakh and Sikkim.

China, which initially did not reveal its casualty numbers, later said four of its soldiers had been killed.

### 11 rounds of talks

India and China have so far held 11 rounds of military talks for disengagement and de-escalation in eastern Ladakh since the stand-off began early May last year. Defence officials said there was no clarity yet on when the next round of talks would be held.

Army chief General M.M. Naravane recently said India was dealing with China in a "firm and non-escalatory" manner and the coming rounds of talks would focus on restoration of *status quo ante* of April 2020.

The Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson recently said the process of disengagement along the LAC "remains unfinished" and an early completion of disengagement could lead to de-escalation of forces which would "hopefully" lead to full restoration of peace and tranquillity in the border areas and enable overall progress in the bilateral relationship.

## Hyderabad toll shows massive undercount

Comparatively, the excess deaths multiple over the registered death toll in Kolkata and Chennai for 2021 was 4.5 and 3.3, in analyses published in *The Hindu*.

The excess deaths in the corporation could not be compared to the GHMC's official COVID-19 death toll as the State does not publish the district-wise pandemic fatalities, unlike many other States in the country. In fact, on two instances, the Telangana High Court had pulled up the State government for not furnishing the proper tally of COVID-19 deaths.

Last year, on September 4, the High Court observed that the low daily tally of deaths published by the government was "unbelievable".

### 'Window dressing'

Recently on April 27, the High Court wondered if the State government was resorting to "window dressing" over the number of deaths.

"If the State furnished fudged figures of deaths due to coronavirus, then people would not fear deaths due to the virus. It will be more damaging and [would] harm [the] public," Chief Justice Hima Kohli had observed then.

It is important to note that excess deaths could also include deaths due to other causes because of the inability or the lack of access to health services that were diverted to cater to the pandemic.

However, most of these excess deaths in a pandemic peak should largely represent COVID-19 related deaths.

### Actual deaths

The number of actual deaths might be even higher than what the GHMC had registered.

According to the latest National Family Health Survey (2019-20), only 74% of deaths were registered with the civil authorities in Telangana. In urban areas, like GHMC, the number rose to 79%.

"The caseload and the number of deaths did not match in Telangana where all the deaths are not registered. We need to reconcile the numbers by identifying and verifying the deaths which is a post-facto exercise. But it is a politically-loaded decision," says Dr.

B.R. Shamanna, an epidemiologist with the University of Hyderabad.

As the official death count for Hyderabad has not been made available, we did a comparison with other cities in south India to arrive at the estimated undercount.

For instance, as of June 12, 27% of all deaths in Tamil Nadu occurred in the capital, Chennai, while 47% of all deaths in Karnataka occurred in Bengaluru city.

If the trends in Bengaluru held, the Hyderabad corporation would have recorded close to 820 deaths in 2021.

The excess deaths in Hyderabad, 14,332 would be then 17.5 times more than the estimated reported deaths.

Correspondingly if the trends in Chennai held, the undercount factor would be 30.5 times. If these trends are extrapolated to the entire State, the actual death toll from COVID-19 could range from 57,000 to 1,00,000.

### During first wave

In 2020, the total reported deaths due to COVID-19 (from April to December) in Telangana was 1,535. But there were 18,420 "excess" deaths in the Hyderabad corporation alone last year — the difference between the certified deaths registered in the same months for 2020 and the average for the previous four years (2016-2019).

This suggests that COVID-19 deaths could have been undercounted by a factor of 12 for 2020, much higher than the undercount factor in the second wave. If official COVID-19 deaths in the corporation alone were considered, the undercount factor could have been double (24 times) in 2020.

Text messages and calls to the Telangana Director of Public Health for a reaction to these figures remained unanswered.

"We have to conduct a verbal autopsy to understand the cases and reasons so that we are accurate. Other epidemics like measles have been controlled due to such exercises. Only then we will get a good handle over the pandemic," said Dr. Shamanna.

(With inputs from *Serish Naniseti, Rakesh Dubbudu, Sumant Sen and Jasmin Nihalani helped with data compilation*)

# Decision on Class XII marks to be put off

Likely to recommend using Class X and XI final scores, Class XII internals, says CBSE panel member

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI

After ten days of gathering inputs and deliberating on how to assign marks for Class XII students from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), an expert panel is largely in favour of using a combination of final exam scores from Class X and XI, and internal marks from Class XII. Officials say the panel may take a few more days for a final decision, although it was scheduled to submit its recommendation on Monday.

Class XII board examinations, scheduled to be held in May, were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Announcing the decision on June 1, Prime Minister Narendra Modi ad-



The panel was scheduled to submit its recommendation on Monday.

ded that "CBSE will take steps to compile the results of Class XII students as per a well-defined objective criteria in a time-bound manner." Subsequently, on June 4, CBSE announced a 12-member panel of stakeholders to decide that criteria within ten days.

Although that deadline ends on Monday, two members of the panel told *The Hindu* that it was likely to be extended by a few days.

The panel has consulted with CBSE principals, as well as with the centrally-run Kendriya Vidyalaya and Navodaya Vidyalaya schools to get their feedback. With all Delhi State government schools affiliated to the CBSE, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia wrote to Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Friday as well. His suggestion is to give 30% weightage to Class XII internal pre-board exams, and 20% weightage each to Class X board exams and Class IX internal final exams. This would add up to the 70% score given for theory

exams, leaving the remaining 30% to Class XII practical exam marks.

"Most stakeholders are in favour of something similar to the Delhi government proposal, but we have not reached a final consensus yet," one member of the panel told *The Hindu*. "It was felt that this is the best option to judge a consistent student. Class X marks would be considered reliable as they were board exams. And we will also enforce the school moderation method to ensure that internal marks are not inflated beyond the school's usual mark distribution in previous years."

Another option would be to use the internal marks from pre-board exams, unit tests and project work in

Class XII only. "Most stakeholders were not in favour of this as it was felt that not all students may have been able to attend exams this year because of COVID," said the panel member, adding that there was a higher possibility of schools inflating marks using this option.

The panel is not likely to recommend that only grades be assigned, rather than specific marks, said the member. "Yes, the Central universities may use a common entrance test for admissions and not use Class XII marks at all. But most State universities and smaller universities are dependent on Class XII marks for admission. We cannot assign grades alone," added the member.

## Farming amid pandemic



Quick work: Women carrying paddy saplings during partial relaxation of the lockdown in Budgam district, J&K, on Sunday. •PTI

## Touched by love from Arunachal: YouTuber

Singh was held for slur against MLA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

YouTuber Paras Singh, who was granted bail by a court in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh's capital, on June 11, said he was touched by the love and care from the people of the State he had derided in one of his videos. The social media influencer also told the local media that he was going back home enlightened about the State and Northeast India.

"I realised I made a great mistake and hurt the sentiments of the people of Arunachal Pradesh and the northeast. I will try my best to win their hearts back," he said after a two-week stay in custody in Itanagar.

He was arrested in May for a racial slur against Ninnong Ering, a Congress MLA, and the people of the State.

"I know the people of Arunachal Pradesh were very angry with me because of the thoughtless statements I made in one of my videos and I am very embarrassed about it. This made me think that the people here would be very upset, but once they got to know me and my story, everyone treated me so well," he said.

"Each individual that I met during the past two weeks during my stay in the jail here was very kind. Everyone taught me something new and something good about the State," he added.

## Navy divers in Meghalaya to assist mine rescue



Rescue mission: Navy divers descending the 500-foot-deep coal mine in East Jaintia Hills district on Sunday. •PTI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

An Indian Navy team on Sunday began assessing the coal mine in Meghalaya where five miners have been trapped since May 30.

Frequent rain and underground water seeping in from inter-connected mines had affected the search and rescue operations in the Sutnga area of East Jaintia Hills district for almost a fortnight.

The operation has been virtually a rerun of the December 2018 mine disaster at Ksan in the same district, in which at least 17 miners died.

"A team of more than 10

Navy divers arrived yesterday (June 12) with equipment. They have been assessing the situation for starting operations that have been affected by rainfall," Superintendent of Police Jagpal Singh Dhanoa said.

"Almost 100 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force, the State Disaster Response Force and the district police have been deployed there. Water is being pumped out simultaneously from two inter-connected mines about 300 metres apart aerially, but the water level in the shaft where the miners were working is still over 100 ft," he said.

## Maratha issue: Mete calls for stir on June 26

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
PUNE

Cranking up the pressure on the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government in Maharashtra over the Maratha quota issue, Shiv Sangram chief Vinayak Mete, an ally of the BJP, has called for a massive protest in Aurangabad on June 26.

Mr. Mete also said a motorbike rally would be staged in Mumbai on June 27. "If our demands are not met by July 5, we will not allow the monsoon session of the Legislature," he said.

## Mystery shrouds probe into actor Sushant's death

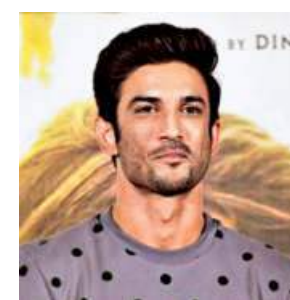
A year and several efforts later, no chargesheet filed yet

SONAM SAIGAL  
MUMBAI

Sunday marked the first death anniversary of 34-year-old Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Soon after he was found dead at his Bandra apartment in Mumbai, political parties started trying to gain mileage from the incident, leading to investigations by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). But none of the agencies have brought out a concrete report on Sushant's death.

The Mumbai police registered an accidental death report and said the actor had died by suicide. After his death, then Mumbai police spokesperson and Deputy Commissioner of Police Pranay Ashok had said, "He died by suicide... The police have not found any [suicide] note yet."

But 14 days later, on June 28, 2020, the actor's father registered a First Informa-



Sushant Singh Rajput

tion Report (FIR) in Patna accusing six people, including actor Rhea Chakraborty and her family members, of abetting Sushant's suicide. The actor's father, in his complaint, also claimed that ₹15 crore had been transferred from his son's account to a few bank accounts.

The FIR at Bihar saw the ED register a case on July 31, 2020, and begin a probe into alleged money laundering. Meanwhile, a team of the Bihar police arrived in Mumbai to investigate the case and found no cooperation from the Mumbai police in the matter. The Mumbai police did not cooperate as they

felt it was against the norms to register an FIR in Bihar into a case that it (the Mumbai police) was investigating.

This led to political outrage, following which the Bihar government transferred the case to the CBI. On August 6, 2020, the CBI registered an FIR against Ms. Chakraborty and others, and started a probe.

Meanwhile, the ED, which is probing the money laundering case, found mention of drugs in mobile phone data it had recovered during its investigation. Based on a letter from the ED, the NCB was roped into the investigation. After 10 months of investigation, NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede told *The Hindu*, "We have so far arrested 35 accused, seized 7 kg of drugs, ₹35 lakh, and some foreign currency. The investigation in the Sushant Singh murder case is still going on." CBI officials said the investigation was on. "We are investigating from all possible angles," said a senior CBI officer.



## PM seeks support on patent waiver

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sought "strong support" from the G7 countries for the joint India-South Africa proposal for a TRIPS (Intellectual Property Rights) waiver for coronavirus-related medicines and vaccines.

Mr. Modi and other guest leaders attended three special sessions along with the G7 countries, including one on global recovery from the pandemic and access to vaccines, where the G7 committed to donating a billion vaccines to poorer countries, as well as a session on Sunday on climate change actions leading up to the COP-26 summit in the U.K. later this year.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the G7 countries all supported "text-based negotiations" on the TRIPS waiver proposal, although the European Union is yet to endorse it. "President Macron also highlighted the need to focus on ramping up production capacity in Africa and called on India to lend its expertise as an important production hub globally," said MEA Secretary (Economic Relations) P. Harish, adding that the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who was also present, had said the TRIPS waiver would enable the UN plans to vaccinate the globe by doubling the production of coronavirus vaccines. "PM's views were appreciated by other leaders in the gathering," Mr. Harish added.

## Digital tech reshaping management education: experts

Virtual conclave details impact of innovation on teaching and learning

MADHUVANTI S. KRISHNAN

As part of its Virtual Conclave for Career Guidance 2021, the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), in association with The Hindu Group, hosted a webinar on "How Digital Technology is Changing the Curriculum of Management Education" on Saturday.

Ms. Jasjeet Kaur, Executive Director, Imarticus Learning, pointed out that the pandemic had "opened gates to innovative methods of knowledge transmission globally and accelerated the adoption of digital technolo-



gies to deliver education. With rapid changes in the education sector, everything from the way we teach and learn will change."

Mr. Rupesh Bisht, CEO, Master's Union, spoke about how the introduction of a tech component would help management schools create a stronger teaching mechanism while making traditional teaching methods more in-

dustry-relevant.

"Students who are equipped with tech components will not only be participants, but will also drive business processes. They will be able to bring in perspectives that will provide a different and much-needed outlook in solving real-world business problems," Mr. Bisht said.

Dr. V.M. Ponnaiah, Dean, College of Management, SRMIST, explained that with changes in both business processes and models, "there is constant scope for specialisation in the areas of fintech, digital marketing, business analysis, AI and Da-

ta Science, among others. Often, credit transfers for applicable programmes are available and there are immense opportunities to learn from immersion programmes. So, every student should make use of such opportunities and align his/her interest with the company he/she is joining. Just like how organisations have a mission and vision for their growth, so, too, should students".

The session, moderated by Yashasvini Rajeshwar, Founder and CEO, Auxohub, concluded with a Q&A session. The webinar is available at <https://bit.ly/3ghnE9r>.



J&K police seek Google's help on Parra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI

The U.S. authorities and Google were approached by the Jammu and Kashmir police to share email contents exchanged by Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra, a close aide of PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, with Pakistan-based secessionist leaders and terrorists, a chargesheet filed by the Union Territory police has said.

The chargesheet said there is prima facie evidence "sufficient to launch prosecution" against Mr. Parra for establishing a nexus with terrorists to seek their backing for political gains and for reciprocating by way of providing help and support, which led to terror strikes. The chargesheet said Mr. Parra used to share information through several email services, of which three have been brought on record.

Mr. Parra's lawyer and the PDP denied all allegations and termed them "politically motivated".

'Centre curbed militancy in J&K'

Union Minister G. Kishen Reddy lays foundation stone of a temple in Jammu

PEERZADA ASHIQ SRINAGAR

Union Minister of State for Home G. Kishen Reddy, who laid the foundation stone of a Balaji temple of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in Jammu on Sunday, said the Centre had managed to curb infiltration and militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in the past two years.

"Barring a couple of incidents of violence reported in J&K, the situation has changed across India and J&K in the past two years. The government has managed to curb infiltration, and militancy stands controlled in J&K," he said.

Mr. Reddy said the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the Centre's plan to push development initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir.

"COVID-19 did play a spoilsport and hit the development projects. Once the pandemic ends, we will take J&K to new heights of development," he said.

Earlier in the day, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha, Mr.



Big gathering: Jammu and Kashmir Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha during the foundation stone laying ceremony with G. Kishen Reddy and Jitendra Singh. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Reddy and Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh participated in the 'Bhoomi Pujan' of the Balaji temple of the TTD.

"Pilgrims from south India will also start visiting Jammu and will pay obeisance both at the Balaji Tem-

ple as well as the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine. This will result in development of the area and also help in integration," Mr. Reddy said.

The Jammu & Kashmir government has transferred 496 kanal (62 acres) and 17 Marla of land to the temple,

the first such instance since the Centre in 2019 ended J&K's special constitutional position.

Meanwhile, Mr. Reddy will also chair a meeting of security top brass to review the security of Jammu & Kashmir.

Left parties seek rollback of fuel price hike, announce protest

The economy is going into a deep recession, they say

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Left parties have announced a 15-day protest from June 16 to 30, demanding a rollback of fuel price hike and calling for controlling the prices of essential commodities.

In a joint statement signed by general secretaries of the five Left parties - Sitaram Yechury of the CPI(M), D. Raja of the CPI, Debabrata Biswas of the All India Forward Bloc, Manoj Bhattacharya of the Revolutionary Socialist Party and Dipankar Bhattacharya of the CPI(ML) - the group pointed out that the prices of petroleum products had gone up by 21 times since the results of the recent Assembly elections were announced on May 2.

"This is leading to a cascading inflationary spiral with the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) rising to an 11-year high. The prices of food articles have risen by nearly 5% in April. Primary commodi-



Steep rise: Parties said the prices of petroleum products have gone up by 21 times since the poll results in May. ■FILE PHOTO

ties saw a rise of 10.16% and manufactured products have risen by 9.01%. By the time these commodities reach the retail markets, the consumers are charged much more," the parties said.

Earlier, the Congress, too, had held a day-long protest at petrol pumps across the nation against the fuel price rise. The Left parties said that the economy was going into a deep recession. "Clearly, unscrupulous black-marketing and hoarding is taking place under state patronage," they said.

The recent announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of extending till Deepavali the PM Garib Anna Yojana of 5 kg of foodgrains was inadequate, the parties said. Instead, 10 kg of foodgrains per month to all individuals, including a food kit with pulses, edible oil, sugar, spices, tea and so on must be distributed free, they said. "Modi government must immediately give direct cash transfers of ₹7,500 per month for six months to all families not in the income tax-paying bracket," the statement said.

'BJP's apathy towards farmers will hurt it in U.P.'

RLD chief talks about 2022 election

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Stating that the BJP's alleged "apathy" towards protesting farmers will hurt it in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election in 2022, Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant Chaudhary on Sunday said artificial issues such as "love jihad" and "cow terror" would not work as issues of development would win in the election.

The newly appointed RLD chief asserted that his party would not allow a communally polarised campaign to ruin the Hindi heartland State.



Jayant Chaudhary

sues would come first and an understanding of those needed to be built between all alliance partners.

The State government's COVID-19 response had been atrocious and no one could forget the scenes of bodies in the Ganga, he added. He also said farmers should be the biggest poll issue in the country, and that they had been denied their rights for far too long. The "apathy and insensitive" attitude towards the protesting farmers would continue to haunt and hurt the BJP in polls, he said.

Mr. Chaudhary had participated in a number of "kisaan panchayats" in western Uttar Pradesh, where his party had a significant presence over the years, and campaigned aggressively against the Centre's farm laws.

'Strong ties with SP'

In an interview with PTI, Mr. Chaudhary said his party and the Samajwadi Party had a good rapport and a strong working relationship. He said details needed to be worked out for a formal alliance for the election.

Asked if a 'Mahagathabandhan' or a grand alliance was needed in the State to take on the BJP and whether the BSP and the Congress would be part of it, Mr. Chaudhary said, for him, is-

Sena to hold CM's post for full term of MVA govt., says Raut

Rumours of differences in the coalition are false, he says

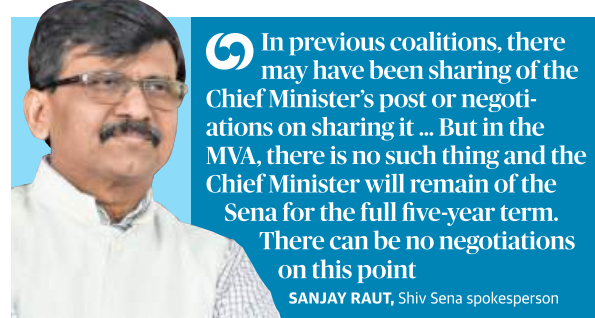
SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE PUNE

Stating that the question of the Maharashtra Chief Minister's post remaining with the Shiv Sena was "not negotiable", Sena MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut on Sunday said Maharashtra's top job would remain with his party till the current tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) led by Uddhav Thackeray completed its full five-year term.

Mr. Raut, who is on a party-building tour in north Maharashtra, was speaking in Nashik.

Responding to Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole's hints that his party could contest separately in the local elections and that the Congress would emerge 'number one' in the State by 2024, Mr. Raut dispelled all speculation of discontent within the MVA, stressing no one was upset in the coalition.

"In previous coalitions, there may have been sharing of the Chief Minister's post or negotiations on sharing it



In previous coalitions, there may have been sharing of the Chief Minister's post or negotiations on sharing it... But in the MVA, there is no such thing and the Chief Minister will remain of the Sena for the full five-year term. There can be no negotiations on this point

SANJAY RAUT, Shiv Sena spokesperson

between parties... But in the MVA, there is no such thing and the Chief Minister will remain of the Sena [Uddhav Thackeray] for the full five-year term. There can be no negotiations on this point... Even Sharad Pawar has clarified this in his speech on the occasion of the NCP's foundation day recently. While there is no doubt in any of our coalition partners' [Congress and NCP] minds on this count, this issue is only being raked up repeatedly in the media," said Mr. Raut.

The Sena had broken its alliance with the BJP in 2019 over the issue of the Chief Minister's post, forming an ideologically opposed coal-

ition instead with the Congress and the NCP. Earlier, Mr. Raut had hit out against the BJP, alleging that the Sena always had a secondary status in the previous BJP-Sena government and was treated akin to "slaves".

Meanwhile, in a riposte to Mr. Raut, the BJP's Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, Pravin Darekar, said the Sena MP was merely putting on a brave face and that the MVA was rife with dissension. "The NCP is padding up to stake their claim on the Chief Minister's post, while Nana Patole's remarks make it clear that the Congress wants to go it alone in the next Assembly polls."

Cong. needs widespread reforms: Sibal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Congress must bring widespread reforms across all levels of the organisation to show it is no longer in a state of inertia and to present itself as a viable political alternative to the BJP, party veteran Kapil Sibal said on Sunday.

"India needs a resurgent Congress. But for that, the party needs to show that it is active, present, aware and is in the mood to engage meaningfully," the former Union Minister said in an interview. "For this to happen, we will need to have widespread reforms at the organisational hierarchy both at the central and State levels to show that the party is still a force to reckon with..."

Mr. Sibal, who was among the group of 23 dissenting leaders of the party, acknowledged that at present, there is no strong alternative to the BJP, but said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has lost the moral authority to rule and the Congress can gain from the current mood in the country.

NSD to hold interviews for the post of Director

Previous panel of names set aside

DAMINI NATH NEW DELHI

Almost three years after the post fell vacant, the National School of Drama (NSD) is set to hold interviews for the post of its new Director this month, after having set aside a panel of names selected in October 2018.

Since then-Director Waman Kendre's term ended in September 2018, Suresh Sharma has been Director in-charge. A selection committee recommended the names of four theatre personalities in October 2018, according to the file noting accessed by The Hindu. Among the names on the panel were Professor Sharma and Kerala-based director Thulaseedhara Kurup.

Mr. Kurup wrote to Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel on June 9 alleging that the interviews scheduled to start from June 24 would be in contempt of court as the matter was sub judice. Mr. Kurup alleged that he had been selected as the Director but it was set aside as there had been a year-long delay in processing the file. He had also moved the Delhi High Court seeking his appointment.

A Culture Ministry official said the court had not placed a stay and that Mr. Kurup had been selected for interviews this time too. The official said the 2018 panel was valid for a year but the appointment was not completed in that time frame.

MHA order inviting citizenship applications faces SC challenge

The May 28 directive is discriminatory, say petitioners

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

A May 28 order of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) inviting non-Muslim refugees such as Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists belonging to Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan residing in 13 districts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Punjab to apply for Indian citizenship is increasingly becoming the focus of challenge before the Supreme Court.



preme Court against the Executive Order issued by the Ministry.

Mr. Ahmed urged the court to declare the MHA order "unconstitutional, discriminatory and ultra vires" as it seeks to "utterly deprive the Muslims to seek for citizenship by registration and naturalisation equally by virtue of their religion under Sections 5 and 6 of the Citizenship Act, 1955".

A fortnight ago, the IJUL, through advocates Haris Beeran and Pallavi Pratap, urged the Supreme Court to stay the May 28 order. It said the order delegates the power to grant citizenship by registration and naturalisation to the Collectors of these districts.

The IJUL said the Home Ministry's Order was a ruse to implement the "malafide designs" of the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) to grant Indian ci-

izenship on the sole basis of religion.

According to the CAA, Indian citizenship would be given to non-Muslim persecuted minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan - Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian - who came to India till December 31, 2014.

The party said the CAA was already under challenge before the Supreme Court and the May 28 order intends to circumvent judicial scrutiny.

The government had earlier averted a stay on the CAA by assuring the top court that the rules under the Act had not yet been framed. There were widespread protests in different parts of the country following the enactment of the CAA in 2019. Delhi had even seen riots in February last year. The IJUL had said classification of applicants for citizenship on the basis of religion is illegal. The order does not "withstand the test of Article 14 inasmuch as it treats people within a particular class i.e. persons entitled to apply for citizenship by registration and naturalisation unequally by virtue of their religion".

Advertisement for Security Printing Press (SPMCL) regarding tender for hardware required for implementation of SPMCL-ITK 3D Tag Project. Includes contact details and terms of the tender.

Advertisement for Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) regarding tender notification for procurement, erection and commissioning of two new 8 MVA, 66 KV/6.6 KV Power Transformers. Includes details of the tender process and contact information.

Advertisement for Wheels India Limited, a Regd. Office in Chennai, offering services for purchase of Mild Steel scrap items. Includes contact information and website details.

Advertisement for the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, PHED, Region Ajmer, inviting tenders for works. Includes details of the tender process and contact information.

Advertisement for the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, PHED, Region Ajmer, inviting tenders for works. Includes details of the tender process and contact information.



Patriarch of 'world's largest family' dead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Zion-a Chana, patriarch of a Christian cult who held the world record for being the head of the "world's largest family", passed away at a private hospital at Aizawl in Mizoram on Sunday. He was 76.

His family said he had been suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure. He was unable to eat since June 7 and went into a coma on June 11.

Doctors from Aizawl went to his village, Baktawng Tlangnam, about 100 km from Aizawl, and advised his family to shift him to the capital.

He died soon after being brought to the hospital on June 13.

"Mizoram bids farewell to Mr. Zion-a, believed to head the world's largest family," Chief Minister Zoramthanga said.

Mr. Chana headed the Chana Pawl, a cult that his father, Khuangtuaha, had founded in June 1942. The cult believes in polygamy and has about 2,000 members, most of them living in the self-sustaining Baktawng Tlangnam.

Mr. Chana had 181 members living under one roof - his 39 wives, 94 children, 33 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

No greater risk to children from anticipated third wave: report

'Mortality rate among hospitalised COVID-positive children below 10 was 2.4%'

JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI

There is no evidence so far to conclude that children face a greater risk of infection or are at greater danger from a COVID-19 infection from an anticipated third wave, according to a report from The Lancet COVID-19 Commission India Task Force. The group consists of paediatric experts from across the country comprising clinicians from top government medical colleges and large private or charitable hospitals.

They were tasked with examining the evidence and recommending practical clinical tools and strategies for providers, and guidance for policymakers and the public to effectively address COVID-19 in children. Though data from India were limited, the mortality rate amongst hospitalised COVID-19 positive children below the age of 10 (excluding neonates) was 2.4%. About 40% of the children who had died had co-morbidities and 9% of all hospitalised COVID-positive children presented with severe illness, all under 10 years of age. These observations were similar during the two surges of COVID-19



A child getting tested for COVID-19 at a camp in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, on Tuesday. • GIRI K.V.S.

infections in India. As of May 2021, of all COVID-positive cases in children globally, 0.1-1.9% resulted in hospitalisation. Children comprised 1.3-3.2% of the total reported hospital admissions. Mortality was also "significantly low" at 0.1% of the total 0.47 million deaths. The mortality rate has also remained the same in both years, at 0.05% of the total annual COVID-19 deaths.

The existing evidence says that while children have milder disease, better prognosis and low mortality in comparison to adults, those with underlying illness could be at higher risk.

For children with a mild

infection, the experts recommend management in home isolation, if feasible, and symptomatic treatment with paracetamol.

A concern with COVID-19 and children were reports around multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C). The manifestation of the condition mimics viral, bacterial and rickettsial infections. The early signs of MIS-C included "atypical Kawasaki disease" (KD)-like presentations in younger children and gastrointestinal manifestations with abdominal pain mimicking appendicitis, diarrhoea and features resembling toxic shock syndrome, rather than acute pneumo-

nia with respiratory symptoms, in older children. However, most published data suggested mild to moderate predisposition in most cases and low mortality linked with MIS-C, they note.

Psychological impact

The experts also highlight the psychological impact of the pandemic. In a recent meta-analysis of 15 studies across 10 countries, describing 22,996 children/adolescents, it was reported that the behaviour/psychological state of a total of 79.4% of the children was affected negatively by the pandemic and quarantine; at least 22.5% of the children had a significant fear of COVID-19, 35.2% complained of boredom and 21.3% had sleep disturbances. Schools ought to be reopened cautiously with options for online access as needed.

"It is imperative to recognise as a society that in our well-meaning attempt to protect our young ones from disease and keep them physically safe, we do not inadvertently impair their minds by curtailing access of expression for their inherent curiosity, creativity, and joy," the authors underline.

Only 3.5% of population is fully vaccinated so far

India continues to report highest number of cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHENNAI

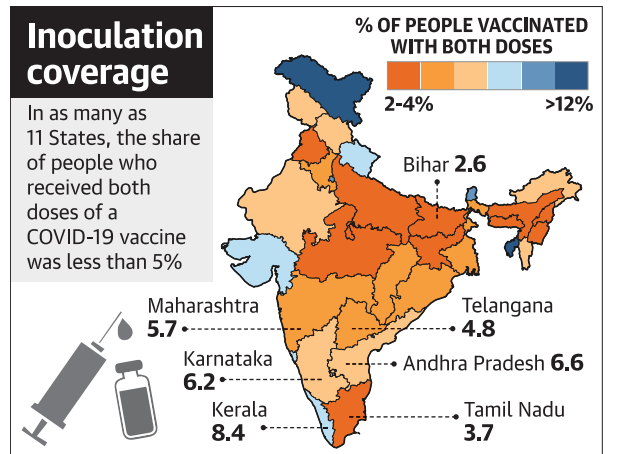
India recorded 67,699 new COVID-19 cases and 3,863 new deaths till 9.30 p.m. on Sunday. The country has so far reported a total of 2,95,12,862 cases and 3,71,440 deaths.

Tamil Nadu reported 14,016 new infections, followed by Kerala (11,584) and Maharashtra (10,442). Maharashtra recorded 2,771 new fatalities, followed by Tamil Nadu (267) and Kerala (206). Maharashtra's fatalities include backlog deaths, which were missed in the previous reports.

The figures do not include cases and deaths from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tripura and Ladakh. The data are sourced from the respective States' health bulletins.

Around 19 lakh samples were tested in the country on Saturday (the results for which were made available on Sunday).

About 34.84 lakh vaccine doses were administered in the country in the 24 hours ending 7 a.m. on Sunday, which was 50,476 doses more than what was recorded in the previous 24 hours. It was also 1.3 lakh doses



more than what was recorded during the corresponding period a week ago.

The seven-day rolling average of daily vaccinations in the country continued to increase. It stood at 30.14 lakh on June 12, which was more than the 26.96 lakh recorded a week before (June 5).

About 21.8% of adults in India, 42.1% of those aged above 45, and 45.9% of people aged above 60, had been administered at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, until 8 p.m. on Sunday. While 15% of the country's population has received at least one dose, only 3.5% are fully vaccinated. The figures are based on the estimated

population in 2021.

The share of people who are fully vaccinated in comparable economies such as Brazil, Russia and South Africa is 11.07%, 9.78% and 0.81%, respectively. Among neighbouring countries, about 2.57% of Bangladesh's population is fully vaccinated while the figure for Pakistan and Sri Lanka stood at 1.29% and 2.02%, respectively. India continued to record the highest number of daily cases in the world, with 90,090 average daily infections on June 12. The two other countries with the highest case count after India are Brazil (66,770 cases) and Colombia (25,384).

Tree of coffee family discovered in Andaman and Nicobar

Pyrostria laljii is the first record of genus Pyrostria in India

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
KOLKATA

A 15-metre-tall tree that belongs to the genus of the coffee family has recently been discovered from the Andaman Islands by a team of researchers from India and the Philippines. The new species, *Pyrostria laljii*, is also the first record of the genus *Pyrostria* in India, the researchers said.



Pyrostria laljii

Plants belonging to genus *Pyrostria* are usually found in Madagascar, but the recently discovered species is new to science.

The tree is distinguished by a long stem with a whitish coating on the trunk and oblong-obovate leaves with a cuneate base, and was first reported from the Wandoor forest in South Andaman.

The other places in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands where the tree could be located are the Tirur forest near the Jarawa Reserve Forest and the Chidia Tapu (Munda Pahar) forest.

*Pyrostria laljii* has been assessed as 'Critically Endangered' based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red

List criteria.

M.C. Naik from the Botanical Survey of India, M. Bheemalingappa from the Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapuram, and Axel H. Arriola from University of the East, Manila, Philippines, published the details of the discovery a few months ago in an international, peer-reviewed journal *Annales Botanici Fennici*.

Mr. Naik pointed out that the discovery was unique as the species was a big tree and had not been recorded as a new species yet.

The species has been named *Pyrostria laljii* after Lal Ji Singh, Joint Director and Head of Office, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Botanical Survey of

India. "While the genus *Pyrostria* is not found in India, there are several genera from the family Rubiaceae that are common in India. These plants, including cinchona, coffee, adina, hamelia, ixora, galium, gardenia, musaenda, rubia, morinda, have high potential for economic value. More studies should be carried out to ascertain whether *Pyrostria laljii* could have some economic value," Dr. Singh said.

Other physical features that distinguish the tree from other species of the genus is its umbellate inflorescence with eight to 12 flowers.

Dr. Singh and Mr. Naik have also discovered a new species of pokeweed named *Rivina andamanensis*.

They said it was found growing under large trees, shaded and rocky areas, along with herbs and shrubby plants.

"This discovery of new species, representing the first record of the pokeweed family Petiveriaceae in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, adds one more family to the islands' flora," the researchers said.

One shot at a time



Glass half full: A person having a cup of tea after getting his first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine at the Blind People's Association campus in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on Sunday. • VIJAY SONEJI

SP, AAP demand probe into land deal by temple trust

OMAR RASHID  
LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday accused the trust set up to build a Ram Mandir in Ayodhya of financial corruption worth crores of rupees in the purchase of a piece of land for

the temple project.

They demanded a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate. Trust general secretary Champat Rai said they would "study the matter" as he brushed aside the allegations.

Holding separate press

conferences, former SP MLA from Ayodhya Pawan Pandey and AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh alleged that the land, valued at ₹5.8 crore, had been purchased and registered by two local businessmen for ₹2 crore on March 18 at around 7.10 p.m., but within 5-10 minutes of

that, the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra purchased the land for an appreciated rate of ₹18.5 crore.

The two leaders alleged that both the land agreements had common witnesses - Ayodhya Mayor Rishikesh Upadhyay and trust member Anil Mishra.

Raids across Odisha on spurious drug

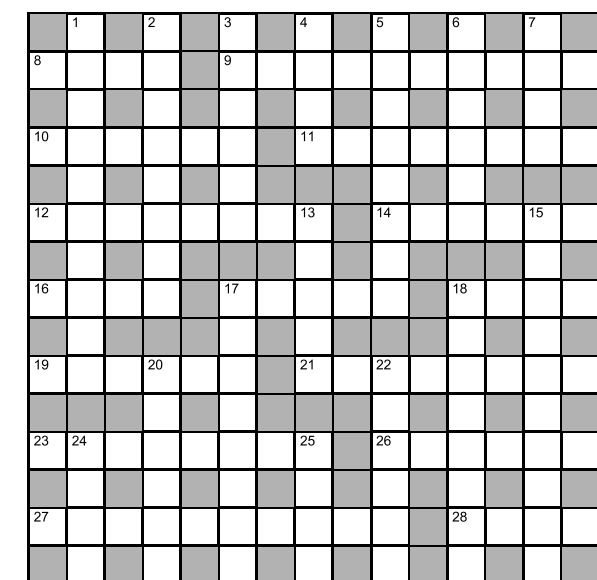
STAFF REPORTER  
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has unearthed a large stock of spurious Favipiravir tablets that had been purchased by a Cuttack-based pharmaceutical firm.

The government had received a tip-off from the Food and Drug Administration, Maharashtra, that spurious Favipiravir tablets (Favimax-400), allegedly manufactured by one Max Relief Health Care, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, had allegedly been purchased by a Cuttack-based pharmaceutical wholesaler.

It was also stated that Max Relief Health Care, Solan, was reportedly a non-existent drug manufacturer. A raid was recently conducted on the premises of Medilloyd Medicament Private Limited, Cuttack, which had purchased the drug. "We conducted a raid on a particular shop where we had found 170 boxes of Favipiravir. One box contained 100 tablets. We have instructed all drugs administrations to conduct raids across all districts," said Odisha Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishor Das.

THE CROSSWORD + 13273  
(set by Incognito)

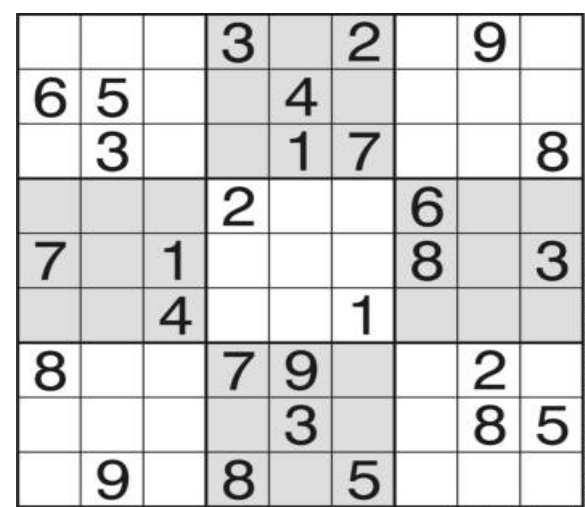


- ACROSS
- 8 Auchinleck's protrusion of lower jaw (4)
  - 9 Saw destroyed? Easily done! (4,4,2)
  - 10 Behind doctor's yard, conduct rehearsal (3,3)
  - 11 Incarcerate fiend with twisted irons (8)
  - 12 Mistakes burn LEDs explosively (8)
  - 14 Score five fours (6)
  - 16 Record faucet leakage at last (4)

- 17 His pa can be silly and imitative (5)
- 18 Arrange type (4)
- 19 Wrongly put ace in beverage container (6)
- 21 Notes played by Scotsman and European (8)
- 23 Trounced? Great achievement indeed! (8)
- 26 Mart arranged nine in array (6)
- 27 Law rejected by devious letters in America's financial hub (4,6)
- 28 President releases model's derriere (4)

- DOWN
- 1 Arrange horse and go on sailor's vacation (5,5)
  - 2 Cast a spell on portal (8)
  - 3 Look! Girl has spear! (6)
  - 4 Small portion of administration (4)
  - 5 Send Delaware's material for repair (8)
  - 6 Want master dumped in river? (6)
  - 7 Bravado John displayed to some extant in training area (4)
  - 13 Pines planted around your personal column? (5)
  - 15 Land damaged airframe around beginning of runway after take-off at first (5,5)
  - 17 A patient, in the beginning, has little hunger (8)
  - 18 Erroneous reasons to include Thai representatives (8)
  - 20 Perhaps, Indian student's containers for fish (6)
  - 22 Fruit Thomas endlessly ate with love (6)
  - 24 Times are changing by the second (4)
  - 25 Profound part of homicide episode (4)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 13272

G	C	M	C	M	A	A	A	A
C	O	S	H	A	B	A	C	A
O	A	L	B	J	H	N		
A	N	G	I	N	A	B	E	E
S	T	A	S	H	I	N	G	
O	A	S	H	I	N	G	T	H
F	O	R	W	A	R	D	T	C
B	H	U	T	A	N	K	E	A
I	O	U	R	N	L	A	B	E
A	G	E	D	C	E	I	B	A
A	E	E	L	L	T	K	I	T

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	4	2	8	5	9	6	7	1
1	9	7	6	2	4	3	5	8
6	5	8	3	7	1	9	2	4
9	6	3	1	4	5	7	8	2
7	8	4	9	3	2	5	1	6
5	2	1	7	6	8	4	9	3
8	7	6	5	1	3	2	4	9
4	3	9	2	8	7	1	6	5
2	1	5	4	9	6	8	3	7

FAITH

Removal of ignorance

The greatest hurdle to the jivatma's salvation is the ignorance of the true identity of the indwelling atma. For all of us, the 'I' sense or the ego sense is strong and this is part of one's deha dharma. It gives rise to the tendency to look upon one's own body, wife, children, kith and kin, etc, one's possessions such as house, profession, etc as the source of happiness.

The entire lifetime is spent in thinking of how to own them, and then how to protect them, and safeguard them from dangers with no concern for the welfare of the atma. In all his works, Adi Sankara teaches us to ponder on the teachings of the sastras which focus on those eternal truths that are of real value for the atma in contrast to the laukika topics with which most of us are generally preoccupied with, pointed out Sri K. Ramasubramaniam in a discourse. In his grantha Satasloki, the acharya highlights the benefits of Mimamsa Vedanta drawing attention to the way the Upanishads try to explain the truth of the immortal atma with simple examples and anecdotes. It is similar to the way a concerned mother, keen to pacify the crying child, tries to offer various playthings or fruits.

The aim is to make us understand that all of us have accumulated ignorance through several births and this has to be removed with conscious effort. As long as the mind is a slave to ignorance, the truths cannot be realised. The Kenopanishad teaches us to evaluate the cause behind the way the sense organs function. The ear or the eye does the wonderful job of hearing the sounds of the external world and seeing the objects. But in reality the ear and the eye are only instruments and cannot function by themselves. It is the immortal atma within that enables these to do their duty.



# Israel coalition set to end Netanyahu era

Naftali Bennett will take over as Prime Minister after Knesset vote to install the new government

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
JERUSALEM

Israel is set to swear in a new government on Sunday that will send Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu into the opposition after a record 12 years in office and a political crisis that sparked four elections in two years.

Naftali Bennett, the head of a small ultranationalist party, will take over as Prime Minister. But if he wants to keep the job, he will have to maintain an unwieldy coalition of parties from the political right, left and centre.

The eight parties, including a small Arab faction that is making history by sitting in the ruling coalition, are united in their opposition to Mr. Netanyahu and new elections but agree on little else. They are likely to pursue a modest agenda that seeks to reduce tensions with the Palestinians and maintain good relations with the U.S. without launching any major initiatives.

Mr. Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, remains the head of the largest party in Parliament and is expected



**New beginning:** Naftali Bennett addressing the Knesset ahead of the vote on the new government in Jerusalem. ■ AFP

to vigorously oppose the new government. If just one faction bolts, it could lose its majority and would be at risk of collapse, giving him an opening to return to power.

## Deep divisions

The country's deep divisions were on vivid display as Mr. Bennett addressed parliament ahead of the vote. He was repeatedly interrupted and loudly heckled by supporters of Mr. Netanyahu, several of whom were escorted out of the chamber.

Mr. Bennett's speech mostly dwelled on domestic

issues, but he expressed opposition to U.S. efforts to revive Iran's nuclear deal with world powers.

"Israel will not allow Iran to arm itself with nuclear weapons," Mr. Bennett said, vowing to maintain Mr. Netanyahu's confrontational policy. "Israel will not be a party to the agreement and will continue to preserve full freedom of action."

Mr. Bennett nevertheless thanked President Joe Biden and the U.S. for its decades of support for Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu vowed to return to power. He predicted

the incoming government would be weak on Iran and give in to U.S. demands to make concessions to the Palestinians. "If it is destined for us to be in the opposition, we will do it with our backs straight until we topple this dangerous government and return to lead the country in our way," he said.

## 'Stability expected'

Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, a nonpartisan think tank, said the new government will likely be more stable than it appears.

"Even though it has a very narrow majority, it will be very difficult to topple and replace because the opposition is not cohesive," he said. Each party in the coalition will want to prove that it can deliver, and for that they need "time and achievements."

Still, Mr. Netanyahu "will continue to cast a shadow," Mr. Plesner said.

The new government is meanwhile promising a return to normalcy after a tumultuous two years that saw

four elections, an 11-day Gaza war last month and a coronavirus outbreak that devastated the economy before it was largely brought under control by a successful vaccination campaign.

The driving force behind the coalition is Yair Lapid, a political centrist who will become Prime Minister in two years, if the government lasts that long.

He called off a planned speech to Parliament, instead saying he was ashamed that his 86-year-old mother had to witness the raucous behaviour of his opponents. In a brief speech, he asked for "forgiveness from my mother." "I wanted her to be proud of the democratic process in Israel. Instead she, along with every citizen of Israel, is ashamed of you and remembers clearly why it's time to replace you," he said.

The new government is expected to win a narrow majority in the 120-member Assembly, after which it will be sworn in. The government plans to hold its first official meeting later this evening.

# G7 agrees to boost climate finance, calls on others to join

Pledges of cash promises lack specifics, say green groups

REUTERS  
CARBIS BAY

G7 leaders agreed on Sunday to raise their contributions to meet an overdue spending pledge of \$100 billion a year to help poorer countries cut carbon emissions and cope with global warming, calling on other developed countries to join the effort. But campaigners said firm cash promises were missing.

Alongside plans billed as helping speed infrastructure funding in developing countries and a shift to renewable and sustainable technology, the world's seven largest advanced economies again pledged to meet the climate finance target.

But climate groups said the promise made in the summit's final communique lacked detail, most importantly a figure for the increases.

A spokesman for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said nations would set out their increases "in due course". Germany said it would boost its contribution by 2 billion to 6 billion euros (\$7.26 billion) a year by 2025 at the latest.

In the communique, the seven nations – the U.S., Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan – reaffirmed their commitment to "jointly mobilise \$100 billion per year from public and private sources, through to 2025".

"Towards this end, we commit to each increase and improve our overall international public climate finance contributions for this period and call on other developed countries to join and enhance their contributions to this effort."

There was a clear push by



**Call for action:** G7 leaders attending the summit in Carbis Bay, U.K., on Sunday. ■ GETTY IMAGES

leaders at the G7 summit in southwestern England to try to counter China's increasing influence in the world, particularly among developing nations.

The leaders signalled their desire to build a rival to Beijing's multi-trillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative but the details were few and far between.

Mr. Johnson, host of the gathering in Carbis Bay, told a news conference that developed nations had to move further, faster.

"G7 countries account for 20% of global carbon emissions, and we were clear this weekend that action has to start with us," he said.

"And while it's fantastic that every one of the G7 countries has pledged to wipe out our contributions to climate change, we need to make sure we're achieving that as fast as we can and helping developing countries at the same time."

## Pledge overdue

Some green groups were unimpressed with the climate pledges.

Catherine Pettengell, director at Climate Action Network, an umbrella group for advocacy organisations, said

the G7 had failed to rise to the challenge of agreeing on concrete commitments on climate finance.

"We had hoped that the leaders of the world's richest nations would come away from this week having put their money their mouth is," she said.

Tasneem Essop, executive director at Climate Action International, said rich countries must "put new and additional finance on the table".

Developed countries agreed at the UN in 2009 to together contribute \$100 billion each year by 2020 in climate finance to poorer countries, many of whom are grappling with rising seas, storms and droughts made worse by climate change.

That target was not met, derailed in part by the pandemic that also forced Britain to postpone the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) until later this year.

The G7 also said 2021 should be a "turning point for our planet" and to accelerate efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions and keep the 1.5 Celsius global warming threshold within reach.

# Britain calls Macron's view of N. Ireland 'offensive'

Foreign Secretary says the idea 'Northern Ireland is not a part of U.K. creates great concern, great consternation'

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
FALMOUTH

Britain accused European Union leaders on Sunday of holding the "offensive" view that Northern Ireland is not fully part of the United Kingdom, as Brexit cast a shadow over the Group of Seven summit.

Britain and the EU are in a spat over post-Brexit trade arrangements that could see British sausages banned from entering Northern Ire-

land, the only part of the U.K. that borders the 27-nation bloc. The dispute is raising political tensions in Northern Ireland, where some people identify as British and some as Irish.

## Sausage row

British media reported that Prime Minister Boris Johnson asked French President Emmanuel Macron when they met on Saturday in Carbis Bay how he would feel if

sausages from Toulouse could not be moved to Paris. They said Mr. Macron replied the comparison did not work because Paris and Toulouse were part of the same country.

The French presidency did not deny Mr. Macron had made the comments. It said he was explaining "that Toulouse and Paris were on a geographical unity of territory, Northern Ireland is on an island. The president wanted

to stress that the situation was quite different and that it's not appropriate to hold that kind of comparison."

U.K. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said the idea Northern Ireland was not an integral part of the U.K. was "not only offensive, it has real world effects on the communities in Northern Ireland, creates great concern, great consternation."

"Can you imagine if we talked about Catalonia, the

Flemish part of Belgium, northern Italy, Corsican France, as different countries?" he said on Sky News. "We need a bit of respect here. And also, frankly, an appreciation of the situation for all communities in Northern Ireland."

Relations between Britain and the EU have soured since the U.K. made its final break from the bloc at the end of 2020, more than four years after voting to leave.

## ELSEWHERE



**Bolsonaro fined for not wearing mask at rally**

Sao Paulo  
Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro led thousands of motorcyclist supporters through the streets of Sao Paulo on Saturday – and got hit with a fine of about \$110 for failure to wear a mask. From his motorcycle, he waved at the largely maskless supporters, who cheered as he insisted that masks were useless for those already vaccinated – an assertion disputed by most public health experts. ■ AP

## Algerians shun parliamentary election

ALGIERS  
Algeria voted on Saturday in a parliamentary election boycotted by the long-running Hirak protest movement and marked by a high abstention rate. Pro-government parties had urged a big turnout hoping to restore stability after two years of turmoil since the ouster of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. ■ AFP

## Gas explosion in China leaves 12 dead, injures 39

BEIJING  
At least 12 people were killed and 39 seriously injured on Sunday after a gas line explosion tore through a residential neighbourhood in central China. The cause of the explosion remains under investigation. More than 900 people were evacuated from the area. Images showed rescuers climbing over broken concrete slabs to reach those trapped inside. ■ AP

## Swiss snub synthetic pesticide ban plan

GENEVA  
Switzerland on Sunday rejected proposals that would have made it the first European country to ban synthetic pesticides. Voters heeded the government's advice and rejected the two publicly-proposed initiatives that would have changed the landscape for farming in the country. ■ AFP

# 'Can extradite cyber criminals to U.S. only on reciprocal basis'

Biden to raise the issue of 'cyberattacks' in meet with Putin

REUTERS  
MOSCOW

President Vladimir Putin has said Russia would be ready to hand over cyber criminals to the United States if Washington did the same for Moscow and the two powers reached an agreement to that effect.

Mr. Putin made the comments in an interview aired in excerpts on state television on Sunday ahead of a June 16 summit with U.S. President Joe Biden in Geneva. Ties between the powers are badly strained over an array of issues.

The Russian leader said he expected the Geneva meeting to help establish bilateral dialogue and revive personal contacts, adding that important issues for the two men included strategic stability, Libya and Syria, and the environment.

Mr. Putin also praised Mr. Biden for having shown



Vladimir Putin

"professionalism" when the United States and Russia agreed this year to extend the New START nuclear arms control treaty.

The White House said Mr. Biden will bring up ransomware attacks emanating from Russia at the meeting. That issue is in the spotlight after a cyber attack disrupted the North American and Australian operations of meatpacker JBS USA.

A Russia-linked hacking group was behind that at-

tack, a U.S. source familiar with the matter said last week.

Asked if Russia would be prepared to find and prosecute cyber criminals, Mr. Putin said Russia's behaviour here would depend on formal agreements being reached by Moscow and Washington.

Both sides would have to commit to the same obligations, he said.

"If we agree to extradite criminals, then of course Russia will do that, we will do that, but only if the other side, in this case the United States, agrees to the same and will extradite the criminals in question to the Russian Federation," he said.

"The question of cyber security is one of the most important at the moment because turning all kinds of systems off can lead to really difficult consequences," he said.

# A rare solidarity for Rohingya

Myanmar's anti-junta protesters wear black flag, make #Black4Rohingya trending

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
YANGON

Anti-junta protesters flooded Myanmar's social media with pictures of themselves wearing black Sunday in a show of solidarity for the Rohingya, a minority group that is among the most persecuted in the country.

Since the military ousted civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi from power in a February 1 coup, an anti-junta movement demanding a return to democracy has grown to include fighting for ethnic minority rights.

The mostly Muslim Rohingya – long viewed as interlopers from Bangladesh by many in Myanmar – have for decades been denied citizenship, rights, access to services and freedom of movement.

Activists and civilians took to social media on Sunday to post pictures of themselves wearing black and flashing a three-finger salute of resistance, in posts tagged



**Crucial support:** Protesters holding banners while making the three-finger salute during a demonstration in Yangon. ■ AFP

## #Black4Rohingya

"Justice must (be) served for each of you and each of us in Myanmar," said prominent rights activist Thinzar Shunlei Yi on Twitter.

Local media also showed a small protest in Myanmar's commercial hub Yangon, with black-clad demonstrators holding signs in Burmese that said they were "protesting for the oppressed Rohingya".

By afternoon, the #Black4Rohingya hashtag

was trending on Twitter in Myanmar, with more than 180,000 mentions.

Sunday's show of support from the mostly Buddhist, ethnic Bamar-majority population is a far cry from previous years, when even using the term "Rohingya" was a lightning rod for controversy.

The Myanmar public was largely unsympathetic to the Rohingya's plight, while activists and journalists reporting on the issues faced vitriolic abuse online.

Prominent Europe-based Rohingya activist Ro Nay San Lwin said the online campaign is a yearly effort to raise awareness – but Sunday was "the first time" he had seen it go viral in Myanmar.

"I am so happy to see those inside Myanmar joined this campaign. I am more hopeful to have a stronger solidarity from them," he said.

# Rare earth metals at the heart of China-U.S. rivalry

Beijing's dominance in these minerals, key to the future of manufacturing, is a cause for concern for the West

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
NEW YORK

What if China were to cut off the U.S. and Europe from access to rare minerals that are essential to electric vehicles, wind turbines and drones?

At a time of frequent geopolitical friction among those three powers, Washington and Brussels want to avoid this scenario by investing in the market for 17 minerals with unique properties that today are largely extracted and refined in China.

"The expected exponential growth in demand for minerals that are linked to clean energy is putting more pressure on U.S. and Europe to take a closer look at where the vulnerabilities are and the concrete steps these governments can take," said



**Fight for supremacy:** In 2019, the U.S. imported 80% of its rare earth minerals from China, says U.S. Geological Survey. ■ AP

Jane Nakano, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

**Heavy dependence**  
In 2019, the U.S. imported 80% of its rare earth minerals from China, the U.S. Geo-

logical Survey says.

The EU gets 98% of its supply from China, the European Commission said last year.

Amid the transition to green energy, in which rare earth minerals are sure to play a role, China's market

dominance is enough to sound an alarm in western capitals.

Rare earth minerals, with names like neodymium, praseodymium and dysprosium, are crucial to the manufacture of magnets used in industries of the future, such as wind turbines and electric cars. And they are already being used in consumer goods such as smartphones, computer screens and telescopic lenses.

This week the U.S. Senate passed a law aimed at improving American competitiveness that includes provisions to improve critical minerals supply chains.

U.S. aims to boost production and processing of rare earths and lithium, another key mineral component,

while "working with allies to increase sustainable global supply and reduce reliance on competitors," Deputy Director of the National Economic Council Sameera Fazli said on Tuesday.

The best hope for boosting American production can be found at the Mountain Pass mine in California. Once one of the major players in the sector, the mine suffered as China rose and ate up its market share, aided by Beijing's subsidies.

China is expected to remain dominant for some time to come, but experts say that if recycling is scaled up, "20 to 30% of Europe's rare earth magnet needs by 2030 could be sourced domestically in the EU from literally zero today."

# Bidder pays \$28 mn for trip to space with Bezos

Blue Origin's crewed spaceflight on July 20

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
WASHINGTON

A mystery bidder paid \$28 million at auction on Saturday for a seat alongside Jeff Bezos on board the first crewed spaceflight of the billionaire's company Blue Origin next month.

The Amazon founder revealed this week that both he and his brother Mark would take seats on board the company's New Shepard launch vehicle on July 20, to fly to the edge of space and back.

The Bezos brothers will be joined by the winner of Saturday's charity auction, whose identity remains unknown, and by a fourth, as yet unnamed space tourist.



An illustration of the capsule that will take tourists into space. ■ AP

"The name of the auction winner will be released in the weeks following the auction's conclusion," tweeted Blue Origin following the sale.

"Then, the fourth and final crew member will be announced – stay tuned."



## COVER NOTE

## To claim or not to claim

K. NITYA KALYANI

Motor Third-Party Liability (TP) insurance is a cover under which the insured does not get to make a claim, but is covered for any claims that others may make on him.

The claimant will be the victim, of a vehicle accident, who sustained injuries or damage to his vehicle or other property. In the case of death, his legal heirs can make the claim against the offending vehicle's owner and, due to the transfer of such liability via the TP policy, the insurance firm will step in to pay the claim as per policy terms. If there is no TP cover, the owner of the vehicle is responsible for the liability.

We saw the procedure for making a TP claim earlier in these columns. It is essentially petitioning a special court called the Motor Accidents Claim Tribunal (MACT). MACTs have a huge caseload, leading to time-consuming legal proceedings.

In cases where claims are filed before the MACT, out-of-court negotiated settlements are encouraged. This will be recorded by the court. Both time and penal interest are saved thus. If your vehicle was damaged in the accident, you may be entitled to claim for repairs from your insurer, if you have an Own Damage (OD) cover.

This can be a standalone cover or part of a Comprehensive Motor Insurance policy, which is a combination of a TP and an OD cover. There is a provision that in the case of a collision of vehicles, each vehicle's insurer pays under the respective policy without any need to establish fault.

So, if your vehicle is damaged, claiming from your company is a simpler process. You can avoid long drawn-out legal procedures and get on with your life. In any case, the TP policy has a cap of ₹7.5 lakh as compensation for third-party property damage. Claims above that have to be collected from the vehicle owner. If you are making an OD claim, it will be for actual repair expenses, let us say ₹X. You will receive ₹Y, factoring in depreciation and allowable costs for repairs and parts as applicable. If you go to your insurer's network garage, this process is simpler as it will be cashless.

## Calculating net compensation

But you will also lose your no-claim bonus (NCB) when you claim from your insurer. Depending on the number of your claim-free years, your NCB could be up to 50% of your OD renewal premium. You can start accumulating this again with every future claim-free year. Suppose you have 3 years' worth NCB, calculate its quantum through 3 future years until it is reinstated. Reduce this from ₹Y and you will arrive at the actual compensation you get. Damage to your property other than your vehicle that was part of the accident is another matter as your OD policy will not cover it. Then, your recourse is to file a TP claim with the MACT as outlined earlier.

If it's an injury, the same reasoning applies for deciding where to make a claim. If your own hospitalisation or personal accident policies cover your expenses, consider that route first. If disablement bars you from working and earning, then filing a TP case becomes more justified in terms of effort versus outcome.

In the case of injury, especially leading to disablement, and in the case of death, there are no caps on compensation awarded by MACT. Guidelines under the Motor Vehicles Act are broadly followed and they depend on medical expenses incurred, age of victim, earnings, number of dependents and, the extent of disablement, in case of injury. In the case of death and grievous injury, there is a stronger reason to seek compensation through the TP route over and above claims through the victim's life or personal accident policies.

There are cases where the offending vehicle's TP policy will not be liable to pay compensation: eg, if the driver was drunk when the accident happened or if he was driving without a valid driving licence.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Senior citizens, common investors should opt for high-quality corporate bonds to mitigate the risk of negative real returns

ANAND SRINIVASAN  
SASHWATH SWAMINATHAN

These are difficult days for the Indian middle and lower middle class, especially senior citizens who do not have a regular pension. Most who have not worked for either the Central or State governments or public sector units are unlikely to be receiving pension benefits indexed to their last-drawn salaries and inflation. Instead, these senior citizens depend on income derived as interest from fixed deposits in scheduled banks.

While HDFC Bank offers 4.9% for regular depositors and 5.4% for senior citizens on fixed deposits of maturities of 1 year to 2 years, respectively, SBI offers 5% and 5.50%, for the same tenors, for the respective categories.

## Ravages of inflation

Over the years, the ravages of inflation have meant that these citizens, who held senior positions in the corporate world, face

generational poverty or often have to be dependent on their children.

In recent times, the efforts of the Reserve Bank of India to fight the economic slowdown has meant a further fall in interest rates. But, after a brief period in the middle of the last decade, deposits have ended up delivering negative real returns. Wholesale price inflation is raging at 10.5% and consumer price inflation has averaged above 5% for a year and is inching up. The inflation in consumer prices is unlikely to slow any time soon, as the de-

mand for commodities is bound to go up. The producers will pass on the commodity price inflation to the consumer in the prices of goods sold to them.

Moreover, rising consumer prices will lead to a rise in wages demanded, leading to greater input costs, which will once again push up prices. This is an inflationary cycle that decimates growth leading to stagflation.

To tackle stagflation, the RBI would

have to implement a contractionary monetary policy, which means interest rates would have to rise, and would harm an already fragile economy.

Another factor to consider is the ratchet effect popularised as an economics concept by John Maynard Keynes. The ratchet effect states that after a period of consumer price or wage inflation, the producers and labour markets fail to correct their prices to the equilibrium level. Instead, they

are willing to be out of business than to lower prices. The ratchet effect means that fighting inflation becomes an even bigger problem.

## Shrinking options

Returning to the predicament of the common citizens, the real value of both their capital and interest earned on savings is declining rapidly today. The lower-income and middle classes need a way to guard their wealth and income against inflation. The stock market is usually seen as the saviour of wealth against inflation. But with excess liquidity washing up on our shores from foreign central banks adopting easy money poli-

cies and given the market euphoria, equities are highly overvalued. Real estate is not particularly viable either due to high prices and low rental income yields. Gold is a possible way to guard against inflation, but gold does not provide regular income as it is an unproductive asset. Additionally, it is not feasible to park large amounts in an asset such as gold due to the costs involved (storage and safety costs).

Therefore, senior citizens and the general investor are left with one asset class: bonds. Senior citizens should shift to high-quality corporate bonds issued by reputed companies and banks to

protect themselves from a further loss of principal and interest. These bonds are traded daily and can be liquidated at short notice in an emergency. Since these instruments are tradeable, there is no deduction of tax. This leads to superior tax planning in the hands of the investor. The yields for highly-rated companies are in the region of 8.5-9%. These are attractive returns for high-quality bonds. Senior citizens and regular investors could buy these instruments to mitigate the risk of negative real returns due to rampant inflation.

(Anand Srinivasan is a financial consultant, reachable at anand.s.srinivasan@gmail.com)

# 'Bond' with the best to stay ahead of inflation



## ASK US

## Simple equity funds, a better option for first-time investors

VIDYA BALA

**Q. I have been saving ₹4,000 per month and started earning in the last few months. I want to plan investments in some mutual fund or via SIPs. I am also open to direct investments. What will be a good option for beginners?**

ADITYA RANJAN

**A.** You can consider simple equity funds from the Nifty 50, and Nifty 500 indices and use PPF as part of your debt option. PPF can also act as your tax-saving investment in case you fall under a taxable slab. Apart from this, make sure you take a good health insurance policy and cover your family too, if they don't have one. This has become a necessity now.

If you have dependent parents, spouse, or children, please take a term insurance to cover at least 8 years of your income and a personal accident insurance.

**Q. I am a 20-year-old student. I have no earnings, savings, or investments, so I have zero income. However, I want to learn about financial planning so that whenever I receive my very first salary, I put it in the right place and at the right time. Kindly also suggest how I may earn money being a student.**

LAKSHIKA

**A.** It is good to know that you want to learn and earn. There is plenty of material on the Internet to read up on financial planning. You can also read good books like 'Let's talk Money' and 'Retire Rich'. If you need to earn money as a student, the best

is for you to do a part-time job, likely online in the present scenario, connected with your area of study. Other than this, it is not a wise choice to try to do stock trading to make money until such time you have adequate savings of your own. When you have such savings, start a combination of recurring deposit for shorter periods of 1-2 years and open a PPF account to deposit some savings in it. These early habits will inculcate disciplined savings. You can then slowly venture into other investment products.

**Q. I am a 25-year-old student and have savings of about ₹50,000 for investment. I can also invest ₹1,000-5,000 as monthly contribution in some productive assets, but that must be somewhat predictable and profitable. I can put my money in these options for up to seven years (if better options are available then in that case up to 15 years). Based on the above criteria, please suggest options for me.**

SHIVANI

**A.** If you want your returns to be predictable, then it is best that you go for fixed-income options. At present, consider investing the lump sum in RBI Floating Rate Savings Bond. This is a 7-year lock-in product where interest rate will be floating (7.15% at present) and will increase if the rate goes up and decrease if it falls. But it will remain 35 basis points higher than the NSC rate. So, this is one of the superior-returns-and-safe option today. The return is not fixed — to that extent it is not entirely predictable. But



you can expect better-than-FD rates. For the remaining amount, you can consider 50% of your monthly savings in bank RDs where return is predictable and another 50% in equity index funds where it will be profitable in the long term but will never be predictable. We suggest this considering your age and ability to take risk. Please note that no market-linked product will be predictable.

And it may have short-term losses but can generate profits in the long term.

**Q. I am 25 years old. I recently got a government job, and my basic salary is ₹30,000. I want to make the best use of my salary. Can you please guide me on how to spend? Should I invest a part of my salary, and if yes then where and how? Please also recommend some books on this.**

MOHD ANJUM

**A.** Congratulations on your new job. It is good to start saving early. But it is hard to teach people on how to spend as it is entirely based on personal preferences and habits. However, you can learn a lot about investing and personal finance in good books like 'Let's talk Money'

and 'Retire Rich'. Set aside a sum for investment and then spend. That's a better way to handle your money. Consider simple products like PPF and recurring deposit and slowly start SIP on equity index funds such as the Nifty 50 index. You can then slowly ramp up mutual funds. Do not get swayed by the lure of quick returns in stock markets without taking a few years to understand how it works. Read good books, rather than just listening to videos that teach you 'everything about investing' in 20 minutes.

**Q. I am 70. I had doing business for 45 years. Unfortunately, I faced a loss in business a few years ago and had to sell all my assets to settle liabilities. My wife and I are now left with our residential house and a bank deposit of ₹30 lakh only. I have no pension and we must depend on the interest earned from these deposits. My children are employed, they have their own family responsibilities and are staying separately. Since the bank deposit interest has reduced considerably, we find it difficult to make both ends meet. I request you to suggest some good and safe investment plan which will**

**gain at least ₹25,000 per month for our expenses, including medicines.**

RAMDAS A.P

**A.** I am sorry to note your situation. It is indeed difficult to get a high interest rate in these times. You might want to consider investing in Senior Citizens' Savings Scheme (SCSS) available with the post office and major banks, for ₹15 lakh and the rest in RBI Floating Rate Bonds (available in SBI and a few other large banks and brokerages).

Right now, the SCSS gives 7.4% and the RBI Bonds 7.15%. But the RBI Bond rates may go up if interest rates move up and vice versa since it is a floating rate bond. But you can expect it to be higher than regular FD rates. We do recognise it is hard to meet your target of ₹25,000 per month even with these. Make sure your children include you in any medical insurance policies so that you get cover on at least key illness or hospitalisation.

**Q. I'm 21 years old and have recently completed a bachelor's degree. I now work for a private company, earning about ₹50,000 a month. I'm planning to go abroad and complete my master's this year. Therefore, I want to invest money for 4-5 months. Also, if I were to invest for a year, what would be the best option?**

ASHISH AGARWAL

**A.** Considering the short period of investment, simply invest in FDs or liquid funds. Any other form of investing for this time frame, especially equity market investing, can

be writ with risks. For one year at best, you can start a recurring deposit or use ultra-short debt mutual funds.

**Q. I am pursuing my MBA and I get ₹5,000 for my expenses every month from my dad. Other than an occasional outing for ₹500 a month, I don't spend the rest. So, I want to save it for my future. The amount is lying in my account. I have interest in mutual funds. Can you suggest good mutual fund schemes so that I can divide my 5,000 by five and invest in different schemes to get returns after 10 years?**

VENKI

**A.** Considering your time frame, you might want to test your feet in equity through mutual funds. Use Nifty 50 and Nifty 500 equity index funds and 30-50% of your savings in liquid funds or recurring deposits or PPF (15 years). You can gradually increase this and widen your fund choice with more index funds. Index funds will allow you to simply mimic the market without the need to track fund performance or strategy or fund manager-change. It also comes at a far lower cost as they are passive and simply allow you to ride in key market benchmarks. (Vidya Bala is Co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

## LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Let's take this. It contains less inflation!"

## Life insurance term plan premium

Male: 30 Years, Sum Insured - ₹1 crore, Cover up to - 70 Years

Insurance company	Plan name	Maximum cover up to (Years)	Annual premium ₹
LIC OF INDIA	Tech Term*	80	14,122
Aditya Birla Capital	Life Shield Plan	85	12,998
Aegon Life	iTerm Insurance Plan	100	9,114
Bajaj Allianz	Smart Protect Goal	85	10,911
Bharti AXA	Premier Protect Plan	75	11,092**
Canara HSBC OBC Life	iSelect Star Term Plan	99	11,605
HDFC Life	Click2Protect Plus	85	12,601
ICICI Prudential	iProtect Smart	99	15,628
India First Life	e-Term Plan	80	8,260
Kotak Life Insurance	Kotak e-Term Plan	75	9,558
Max Life insurance	Smart Term Plan	85	11,800***
PNB Met Life	Mera Term Plan Plus	99	12,272
Reliance Nippon Life	Digi Term	80	11,012
SBI Life	eShield	80	15,070
TATA AIA Life	Maha Raksha Supreme	100	12,980

\*Maximum policy term is 40 years | \*\*Bharti AXA coverage upto 65 years for age 30 years  
\*\*\*Max Life offers additional 5% discount for first year

## Health insurance premium

Insurer name	Key features	Plan names	Premium (₹)	Insurer name	Key features	Plan names	Premium (₹)		
Care Health	Day Care Treatments Family Floater option Health Checkups Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	NCB Super Premium	9,092	Digit Healthcare Plus	Hospital Room Eligibility Day Care Treatments Family Floater Option	Option 1 - Maxima Restore Super	8,861		
		Care	8,265			Option 2 - Early cover	7,985		
		Care with unlimited recharge	8,885			Option 3 - Super care	7,541		
Max Bupa Health	Day Care Treatments Hospitalization at Home Family Floater option Alternate Medicine	NCB Super Premium with UAR	9,712	Bajaj Allianz General	Hospital Room Eligibility Wellness Benefits Family Floater Option	Individual Health Guard	12,213		
		Health ReAssure	9,590			SBI General Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Arogya Premier	11,074
Star Health	Family Floater option Restoration of cover Wellness Benefits	Health Pulse Enhanced	10,696	Royal Sundaram General	Day Care Treatments Hospitalization at Home Hospital Room Eligibility Alternate Medicine			Lifeline supreme	8,578
		Health Companion	9,862			TATA AIG	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Medicare	9,820
		Go Active	11,747					Universal Sompoo General	Hospitalization at Home Hospital Room Eligibility Alternate Medicine
Aditya Birla Health	Day Care Treatments Day 1 coverage Day 1 coverage Day 1 coverage	Medi Classic	9,661	Raheja QBE	Hospitalization at Home Restoration of Cover Hospital Room Eligibility Day Care Treatments	Health QuBE Basic	4,947		
		Star Comprehensive	11,476			Health QuBE SuperSaver	4,011		
		Young Star Gold Plan	8,389			Health QuBE Comprehensive	5,787		
		Young Star Silver Plan	7,133			Edelweiss Health Insurance- Gold (Health 241 Add-on)	10,916		
		Activ assure Diamond	7,919			Edelweiss Health Insurance Gold	8,733		
Kotak General	Hospital Room Eligibility Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage Day Care Treatments	Activ Health Platinum Enhanced	9,074	Liberty General	Day Care Treatments Hospitalization at Home Hospital Room Eligibility	Basic	9,579		
		Activ Health Enhance ( Diabetes )	17,912			Elite	10,777		
		Activ Health Enhance ( Asthma )	13,170			Supreme	11,337		
		Activ Health Enhance ( Hypertension )	19,889			Oriental Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Individual Mediciam Policy	12,684
		Activ Health Platinum Essential	7,474					Day Care Treatments Hospitalization at Home	
Activ Health Essential ( Diabetes )	15,072								
Activ Health Enhance ( Asthma )	11,240								
Activ Health Enhance ( Hypertension )	16,587								

Data as on June 09, 2021

Source: LIC of India, www.policybazaar.com

For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, for sum insured of ₹10 lakh living in a metro city



# Djokovic resurrects himself, wins Slam No. 19

The Serb comes back from two sets down to beat Tsitsipas; pulls within one Major of Federer and Nadal

## ROLAND-GARROS

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
PARIS  
Novak Djokovic came all the way back after dropping the first two sets to beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-7(6), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 at the Roland-Garros final Sunday for his 19th Grand Slam title.

Djokovic's second trophy at Roland-Garros moves him one major championship away from tying the men's record of 20 shared by Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

It also puts reigning Australian Open champion Djokovic halfway to a calendar-year Grand Slam, something no man has accomplished since Rod Laver in 1969.

The 34-year-old Djokovic eliminated 13-time French Open champion Nadal in a semifinal that lasted more than four hours Friday night. That might be why the 22-year-old Tsitsipas had the upper hand early, and Djokovic looked drained for two sets.

Eventually, though, he started making fewer mistakes, got his best-in-the-game returning on track, served almost flawlessly down the stretch and was



**Incredible:** Djokovic outlasted Tsitsipas in a marathon five-setter to claim his second title in Paris and became the only man in the Open Era to win every Slam at least twice. •APF



able to complete his sixth career comeback from two sets down – and second of the past week.

Indeed, the International Tennis Federation said Djokovic – who trailed 19-year-old Lorenzo Musetti two sets to none in the fourth round – is the first man in the professional era to win a Grand Slam tournament after twice facing a 2-0 deficit in sets.

Experience could have

been a factor, too.

This was the first major final for Tsitsipas and 29th for Djokovic, who also won here in 2016, along with nine titles at the Australian Open, five at Wimbledon and three at the U.S. Open.

Of just as much, if not more, significance to the ultimate outcome Sunday: Djokovic entered the day with a 34-10 record in five-setters – including a men's-record 31

wins in Grand Slam matches of that length – while Tsitsipas was 5-4.

On a sunny and breezy afternoon, with the temperature approaching 80 degrees Fahrenheit (over 25 degrees Celsius), Tsitsipas needed just over 100 minutes to grab a big lead Sunday.

But the tenacious and talented Djokovic did not quit, grabbing early breaks in each of the last three sets.

## FINAL RESULTS

**Men:** 1-Novak Djokovic (Srb) bt 5-Stefanos Tsitsipas (Gre) 6(6)-7, 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4.  
**Women's doubles:** 2-Barbora Krejickova & Katerina Siniakova (Cze) bt 14-Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA) & Iga Swiatek (Pol) 6-4, 6-2.  
**On Saturday: Men's doubles:** 6-Nicolas Mahut & Pierre-Hugues Herbert (Fra) bt Andrey Golubev & Alexander Bublik (Kaz) 4-6, 7-6(1), 6-4.

## PASSING SHOTS



### Memorable double for Krejickova

French Open champion Barbora Krejickova, right, in pic, completed a rare sweep of titles at Roland-Garros as she won a third women's doubles Major trophy with fellow Czech teammate Katerina Siniakova on Sunday. The duo defeated Bethanie Mattek-Sands and Iga Swiatek 6-4, 6-2 in the final on Sunday. Less than 24 hours after she claimed her maiden singles Slam title, Krejickova became the first woman since Mary Pierce in 2000 to lift both trophies at the clay-court Major. Only seven women have completed the titles sweep at Roland-Garros. In addition to her pair of trophies, Krejickova will reclaim the No. 1 spot in the doubles rankings next week.



### Mahut-Herbert duo reigns supreme

French pair Nicolas Mahut and Pierre-Hugues Herbert will turn their focus to winning an Olympic gold medal in Tokyo after claiming the French Open doubles titles for the second time. Mahut and Herbert – who have won all four Grand Slam tournaments together – defeated Alexander Bublik and Andrey Golubev of Kazakhstan 4-6, 7-6 (1), 6-4 in the summit clash on Saturday. It was their fifth Grand Slam title together. Mahut and Herbert won their first title in Paris in 2018. AP

### Officials stand by action against Osaka

French Open organisers defended their "pragmatic" approach in their dealings with four-time Major champion Naomi Osaka during the tournament, saying on Sunday they tried to engage with her several times before she decided to withdraw because she needed a mental health break. "We did it the right way," said French Tennis Federation president Gilles Moretton. "What we did all together with the Slams – we had to do it," Moretton said. "We made the right choice." AP



## SHORT PASSES



### Love you, says Lukaku to Eriksen

**ST. PETERSBURG**  
Romelu Lukaku's first thought after scoring at the European Championship wasn't to celebrate with his Belgium teammates. Instead, the striker wanted to send a heartfelt message to a close friend who was in the hospital. "Chris. Strength, boy. Love you," Lukaku said straight into a TV camera for Christian Eriksen, his teammate at Inter Milan. AP

### Son sends his support to former teammate

**GOYANG (SOUTH KOREA)**  
Son Heung-min sent a message of support to his former teammate Christian Eriksen. After scoring for South Korea against Lebanon in a World Cup qualifier on Sunday, the South Korea skipper held up his hands to show the number 23 – Eriksen's shirt number at Tottenham Hotspur. He then offered a few words in the direction of a nearby TV. APF



### Castagne out of Euros with double fracture

**ST. PETERSBURG**  
Belgium coach Roberto Martinez has said that wing back Timothy Castagne (right, in pic) will miss the rest of the European Championship after sustaining a double fracture of his right eye socket during the match against Russia. Castagne was forced off the field after clashing heads with Russia midfielder Daler Kuzyaev. AP

### England players booed for taking a knee

**LONDON**  
Sections of fans at Wembley Stadium booed England players for taking a knee before the European Championship game against Croatia on Sunday. The boos, which could be heard over those fans applauding, came despite pleas from the team to respect the anti-racism gesture. Croatia's players did not take a knee as expected. Croatia's national anthem was also booed by some of the 22,500 fans allowed into Wembley, which could lead to the country's soccer association being fined by UEFA. AP



### Portugal: Dalot in for COVID-positive Cancelo

**BUDAPEST**  
Portugal defender Joao Cancelo (in pic) has been ruled out of Euro 2020 after testing positive for COVID-19 and will be replaced by Diogo Dalot ahead of its tournament opener against Hungary on Tuesday, the European champion said on Sunday. The versatile player tested positive on Saturday. REUTERS

## Finland stuns Denmark

Lukaku powers Belgium past Russia



**The big one:** Joel Pohjanpalo, centre, heads in Finland's landmark goal. •AP

## EURO 2020

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
COPENHAGEN  
Joel Pohjanpalo scored and Lukas Hradecky saved a penalty to give Finland a 1-0 victory over Denmark on Saturday in a European Championship Group B game overshadowed by Christian Eriksen's collapse.

The game was suspended for about 90 minutes and when play resumed, Pohjanpalo put Finland ahead in the 60th minute when he rose above Joakim Maehle to head home a cross from Jere Uronen. Goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel got his hands on the ball but couldn't keep it out.

**Penalty saved**  
The Danes' best chance came when Yussuf Poulsen went down in the area under a challenge from Paulus Arajuuri. But 'keeper Lukas Hradecky dived to his left to stop Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg tame penalty kick.

Later in St. Petersburg, Romelu Lukaku scored twice as Belgium confirmed

### By the numbers

- 1 - Joel Pohjanpalo scored Finland's first ever goal at the Euros with what was its first shot in the competition
- 3 - Finland's Lukas Hradecky is only the third goalkeeper to save a penalty on his debut in the Euros after Przemyslaw Tyton in 2012 (Poland v Greece) and Trols Rasmussen in 1988 (Denmark v Spain)
- 26 - The number of goals Romelu Lukaku has been directly involved in, in his last 19 appearances for Belgium in all competitions (22 goals, 4 assists)

its status as one of the favourites with a confident 3-0 victory over hosts Russia.

Despite being without key performer Kevin De Bruyne, world number one ranked Belgium was rarely in trouble.

**The results: Group B:** Belgium 3 (Lukaku 10, 88, Meunier 34) bt Russia 0; Denmark 0 lost to Finland 1 (Pohjanpalo 60).

## England gets the better of lacklustre Croatia

Sterling's first goal in a major tournament does the trick for Three Lions

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
LONDON

Raheem Sterling ignited England's Euro 2020 campaign as the Manchester City forward's clinical finish sealed a 1-0 win against Croatia in their Group D opener on Sunday. Gareth Southgate's side was struggling to break down Croatia until Sterling struck in the second half at sun-baked Wembley.

The 26-year-old's first goal at a major tournament – in his 13th game – was the perfect riposte to critics who questioned Southgate's decision to select him instead of Jack Grealish.

Days after he was given an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for his anti-ra-



**Off the mark:** Raheem Sterling, centre, peels off on a celebratory run after scoring England's winner. •AP

cism campaigning, Sterling enjoyed a perfectly-timed moment of redemption.

In a rematch of the 2018 World Cup semifinal won by Croatia, England was ham-

pered by a lack of cutting edge until Sterling came to the rescue.

In truth, this was a far from convincing performance, but Southgate will

## TODAY'S MATCHES

GROUP D
Scotland vs Czech Republic 6.30 p.m.
GROUP E
Poland vs Slovakia 9.30 p.m.
Spain vs Sweden 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Live on Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD)

take heart from the way his team kept its nerve on a pressure-packed occasion.

**The results: Group C:** Austria 3 (Lainer 18, Gregoritsch 78, Arnautovic 89) bt North Macedonia 1 (Pandev 28).

**Group D:** England 1 (Sterling 57) bt Croatia 0.

## Eriksen sends greetings from hospital

Team doctor says he was gone before being resuscitated

**AGENCIES**  
COPENHAGEN

Christian Eriksen remained in hospital and was in stable condition on Sunday, after collapsing during his side's Euro 2020 opening match with Finland, the Danish football association said.

"This morning we have spoken to Christian Eriksen, who has sent his greetings to his teammates. His condition is stable, and he continues to be hospitalised for further examination," Danish FA DBU said on Twitter.

"The team and the staff of the national team has received crisis assistance and will continue to be there for each other after yesterday's incident," DBU said.

Meanwhile, Denmark's



**Huge relief:** It was heartening to see Christian Eriksen regain consciousness after the terrible collapse. •AP

team doctor Morten Boesen said on Sunday that Eriksen's heart stopped and that "he was gone" before being resuscitated with a defibrillator.

"He was gone. And we did

cardiac resuscitation. And it was cardiac arrest. How close were we? I don't know. We got him back after one defib. That's quite fast," said Boesen.

Denmark coach Kasper

Hjulmand said when he spoke to Eriksen, the midfielder was more concerned about his teammates' well being than his own.

"He said, 'I don't remember much but I'm more concerned about you guys. How are you doing?'" Hjulmand said.

Meanwhile, Inter Milan director Giuseppe Marotta has dismissed suggestions that club midfielder Eriksen had previously contracted COVID-19.

Sanjay Sharma of St. George's University of London, the playmaker's cardiologist at former club Tottenham Hotspur, said Eriksen had no prior heart issues during his time with the Premier League side.

## Vinoo Mankad inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame

10 icons across eras honoured to celebrate Test cricket

**SPORTS REPORTER**  
BENGALURU

Former India all-rounder Vinoo Mankad was among 10 cricket icons inducted to the International Cricket Council (ICC) Hall Of Fame on Sunday.

Mankad was among a special edition intake group to celebrate the history of Test cricket, and to coincide with the first ever ICC World Test Championship Final.

### Great record

Mankad, one of India's greatest all-rounders, played 44 Tests. He scored 2,109 runs at an average of 31.47, and took 162 wickets with his left-arm orthodox spin.

Mankad was involved in a 413-run opening partnership with Pankaj Roy against New

### The Inductees

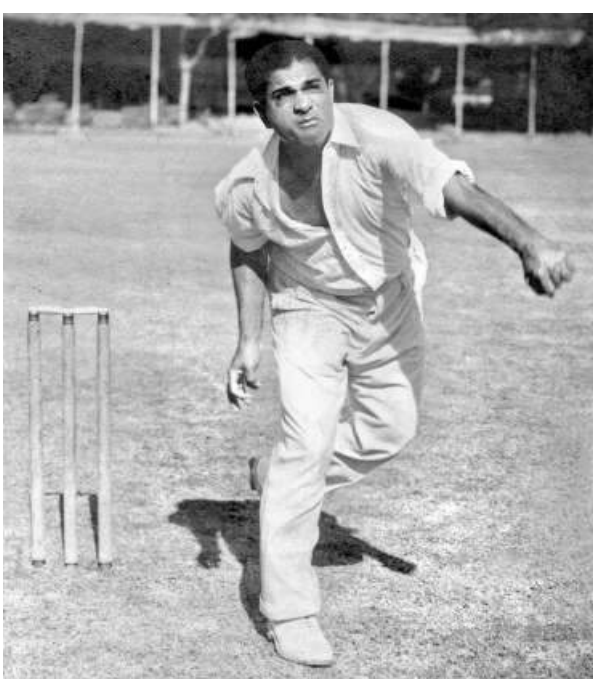
- Early cricket era (pre-1918):** Aubrey Faulkner (SA), Monty Noble (Aus)
- Inter-war era (1918-1945):** Learie Constantine (WI), Stan McCabe (Aus)
- Post-war era (1946-1970):** Ted Dexter (Eng), Vinoo Mankad (Ind)
- ODI era (1971-1995):** Desmond Haynes (WI), Bob Willis (Eng)
- Modern era (1996-2015):** Andy Flower (Zim), Kumar Sangakkara (SL)

Zealand at Madras in 1956, a then world record. Mankad also played a key role in India's first ever Test victory, against England at Madras in

1952, with a 12-wicket match haul. After his playing career, he coached another legendary Indian cricketer and fellow ICC Hall of Fame member, Sunil Gavaskar.

Speaking on Mankad's induction, Gavaskar said, "Vinoo Mankad's legacy has been to tell the aspiring Indian cricketer to believe in oneself. He was a great proponent of self-belief. 'When you get a 100, let that be the knock on the selector's door.'

"If it is unheard, then score that double hundred and let that knock be even louder. You can have the best technique, but if you do not have the temperament to support it, you will not succeed. You have to keep hanging in there and have that self-belief he would say."



**Versatile:** Vinoo Mankad was a match-winner with both bat and ball. •THE HINDU ARCHIVES

## WTC FINAL

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
SOUTHAMPTON

Cheteshwar Pujara says New Zealand will have the advantage going into the World Test Championship (WTC) final after playing and winning the Test series against England, but India will utilise the available time to prepare well for the title clash, starting here on June 18.

"They will obviously have advantage having played two Test matches, but when it comes to the final we will give our best and we know that our team has the potential to do well and win the championship," Pujara told bcci.tv.

"Playing in different conditions in a single day here is



**Big challenge:** Pujara feels that it requires mental strength to adjust to the fickle English weather. •FILE PHOTO

the most challenging part for a batsman because if it rains you go off the field and then suddenly it stops raining and you start again.

between and this is where you need to understand and accept the challenge. Mentally you have to be strong, your concentration needs to be up to the mark."



Milkha Singh's wife Nirmal passes away



Nirmal Kaur. FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Nirmal Kaur, wife of sprint legend Milkha Singh and former captain of the Indian volleyball team, passed away at a Mohali hospital due to complications from the COVID-19 infection she had contracted last month. She was 85 and is survived by her husband, a son and three daughters.

"We are deeply saddened to inform you that Mrs. Nirmal Milkha Singh passed away after a valiant battle against COVID at 4 p.m. today [Sunday]," a statement from the spokesperson of the Milkha family said.

"A backbone of the Milkha family, she was 85 years old. It is tragic that Milkha Singh could not attend the cremation which was conducted this evening as he is still in the ICU of PGIMER in Chandigarh."

Nirmal was brought to Fortis Hospital at Mohali on May 26, two days after Milkha was admitted to the same facility with COVID pneumonia.

A former Director of Sports for Women in the Punjab Government, Nirmal had fought a valiant battle till the very end, the family spokesperson said. "The family has expressed its grateful thanks to everyone for their solidarity and prayers right through the battle which gave them the strength to face it bravely."

New Zealand thrashes England, clinches series

Chasing a target of 38, Latham's side wins second Test by eight wickets with more than a day to spare

NZ IN ENGLAND

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BIRMINGHAM

New Zealand overpowered England by eight wickets in the second Test at Edgbaston on Sunday as it sealed a 1-0 series win with more than a day to spare.

Set a target of just 38 after England tailender Olly Stone was out to the first ball of the fourth day, the Black Caps finished on 41 for two.

Stand-in captain Tom Latham hit the winning boundary to be 23 not out after the first Test of the two-match series at Lord's ended in a draw last week.

Victory gave New Zealand just a third win in 18 Test series in England and a first this century after its 1986 and 1999 triumphs.



Flying high: New Zealand handed England a first series loss at home since 2014. AP

By contrast, this was England's first series loss at home since 2014 defeat by

Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, New Zealand on Sunday toppled India to become the No. 1

ranked Test team in the world. New Zealand now has 123

SCOREBOARD

England — 1st innings: 303.

New Zealand — 1st innings: 388.

England — 2nd innings: Rory Burns c Latham b Henry 0, Dom Sibley c Mitchell b Henry 8, Zak Crawley lbw b Henry 17, Joe Root c Blundell b Ajaz 11, Ollie Pope lbw b Wagner 23, Dan Lawrence c Blundell b Wagner 0, James Bracey b Ajaz 8, Olly Stone c Blundell b Boulton 15, Mark Wood c Blundell b Wagner 29, Stuart Broad b Boulton 1, James Anderson (not out) 0; Extras (b-5, lb-4, nb-1); 10; Total (in 41.1 overs): 122.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-17, 3-30, 4-58, 5-58, 6-71, 7-76, 8-120, 9-121.

New Zealand bowling: Henry

12-2-36-3, Boulton 10.1-2-34-2, Wagner 10.1-18-3, Ajaz 9-4-25-2.

New Zealand — 2nd innings: Tom Latham (not out) 23, Devon Conway c Bracey b Broad 3, Will Young b Stone 8, Ross Taylor (not out) 0; Extras (b-4, nb-2, w-1); 7; Total (for two wickets in 10.5 overs): 41.

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-33.

England bowling: Anderson 5-1-11-0, Broad 4-1-13-1, Stone 1-0-5-1, Wood 0.5-0-8-0.

Man-of-the-Match: Matt Henry.

England Player-of-the-Series: Burns. New Zealand Player-of-the-Series: Conway.

New Zealand won match by eight wickets and series 1-0.

du Plessis suffers concussion



Faf du Plessis. FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
ABU DHABI

Former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis suffered a concussion after a nasty collision with Quetta Gladiators teammate Mohammad Hasnain while fielding during their Pakistan Super League match against Peshawar Zalmi here on Saturday.

du Plessis was taken to hospital for scans. However, much to everyone's relief, du Plessis said on Sunday he was back from the hospital and "recovering".

The collision took place in the 19th over of the Peshawar innings when du Plessis' head hit Hasnain's knee while trying to save a boundary.

"Thank you everyone for all the messages of support. I'm back at the hotel recovering. Have concussion with some memory loss but I will be fine. Hopefully be back on the field soon. Much love," du Plessis tweeted.

It was the second case of concussion in two days for the Gladiators.

In its last match against Islamabad United, a Mohammad Musa bouncer hit West Indian Andre Russell on the helmet. He was replaced by fast bowler Naseem Shah.

When chess met cricket, cinema, music and business on the 64 squares

More than ₹6.7 lakh collected in fund-raiser featuring Anand and celebrities

GENERAL

P.K. AJITH KUMAR  
KOZHIKODE

Viswanathan Anand could have waited for his opponent, Nikhil Kamath, to lose on time, though from a completely winning position. But, the genial genius from Chennai didn't. He resigned, though his rival had only seconds left.

That was one of the memorable moments from a unique COVID-19 fund-raiser event on Sunday featuring Anand and an impressive line-up of celebrities from cinema, cricket, music and business. The event conducted by chess.com raised more than ₹6.7 lakh, most of which will go to Akshayapa-



Unique game: Anand took on Aamir, Arijit and Anany Birla, among others, in an online challenge organised by chess.com. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tra Foundation.

Nikhil's victory was indeed very much the talking point. The founder of Zerodha, India's largest retail stockbroker, used to play chess in his school days.

He wasn't the only one that managed to stretch

Anand, though. Bollywood producer Sajid Nadiadwala played some solid chess before erring in a rook ending.

Kannada actor Sudeep also came up with some fine moves. Anand did win those games, though. He had it easier against Indian cricketer

Yuzvendra Chahal, much easier than he would have hoped, as the wrist-spinner is a former National age-group champion.

Superstar Aamir Khan put up a good fight, despite getting into an inferior position early on. After his loss, Aamir regaled the viewers with anecdotes about his encounters with chess players, including a little girl who thrashed him during the shoot of his movie Lagaan.

Anand's other opponents were actor Riteish Deshmukh, singers Arijit Singh and Ananya Birla and Manu Kumar Jain, global vice president, Xiaomi.

The programme ended with Arijit singing one of his hits, *Ae dil hai mushkil...*

Malvika in final

BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KAUNAS (LITHUANIA)

India's Malvika Bansod defeated France's Anna Tranova in straight games to enter the women's singles final at RSL Lithuanian International badminton tournament here on Sunday.

The third seeded Indian, who had reached the quarter-finals of Austrian Open last month, beat Anna 21-13, 21-10 in a lop-sided contest.

Kheerthi among 17 leaders

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

A day after becoming the National (under-18) girls champion, G. Kheerthi (three points) was leading with 16 others following the third round of the National (under-16) online rapid chess championship on Sunday.

In the open section, top seed Aditya Mittal was among the 35 leaders with three points from as many rounds.

TV PICKS

Euro 2020: Sony Ten 2, 3 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 6.30 p.m., 9.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Copa America 2021: Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 2.30 a.m. & 5.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF

Shakib fined, suspended for three matches

DHAKA Bangladesh star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who has a history of disciplinary breaches, has been suspended for three matches and fined for "showing aggressive behaviour towards the umpire" during a domestic match, the Bangladesh Cricket Board said.

Praggnanandhaa slips to second spot

Nihal, Gukesh tied fourth; Keymer in sole lead

CHESS

RAKESH RAO  
NEW DELHI

R. Praggnanandhaa slipped to second place and required a strong finish over the last four rounds of the Gelfand Challenge online rapid chess tournament on Sunday.

Trailing by half-point to Germany's Vincent Keymer (12 points), Praggnanandhaa was left to rue the costly oversight against Kazakh girl Zhansaya Abdumalik in the 12th round when reached a dominant position but lost his queen to a knight-fork and resigned. The other half-point he dropped on Friday

was also to a Kazakh girl, Dinaara Sadukassova in the final round.

In fact, it was Keymer's final-round win over Zhansaya that gave him the sole lead.

Nihal Sarin, who needed to win all five rounds on Friday to have an outside chance of returning to the title-race, kept winning and caught up with D. Gukesh at the fourth spot.

The results (involving Indians): 15th round: Dinaara Sadukassova (Kaz) drew with R. Praggnanandhaa; Olga Badelka (Btr) lost to Nihal Sarin; D. Gukesh bt Zhu Jiner (Chn); Christopher Woojin Yoo (USA) bt Leon Mendonca.

14th round: Praggnanandhaa

bt Gunay Mammdzada (Aze); Nihal bt Gukesh; Mendonca bt Dinaara.

13th round: Polina Shuvalova (Rus) lost to Praggnanandhaa; Yoo lost to Nihal; Gunay lost to Mendonca.

12th round: Praggnanandhaa lost to Zhansaya Abdumalik (Kaz); Nihal bt Dinaara; Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb) lost to Gukesh; Mendonca drew with Shuvalova.

11th round: Lei Tingjie (Chn) lost to Praggnanandhaa; Gunay lost to Nihal; Gukesh lost to Volodar Murzin (Rus); Abdumalik lost to Mendonca.

Leading standings (including Indians): 1. Vincent Keymer (Ger, 12 points); 2. R. Praggnanandhaa (11.5); 3. Christopher Yoo (USA, 10.5); 4-5. Nihal Sarin and D. Gukesh (10 each); 9. Leon Mendonca (8).

Clippers fight back into the series

Leonard, George do most of the damage in game 3 against Jazz

NBA PLAYOFFS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
LOS ANGELES

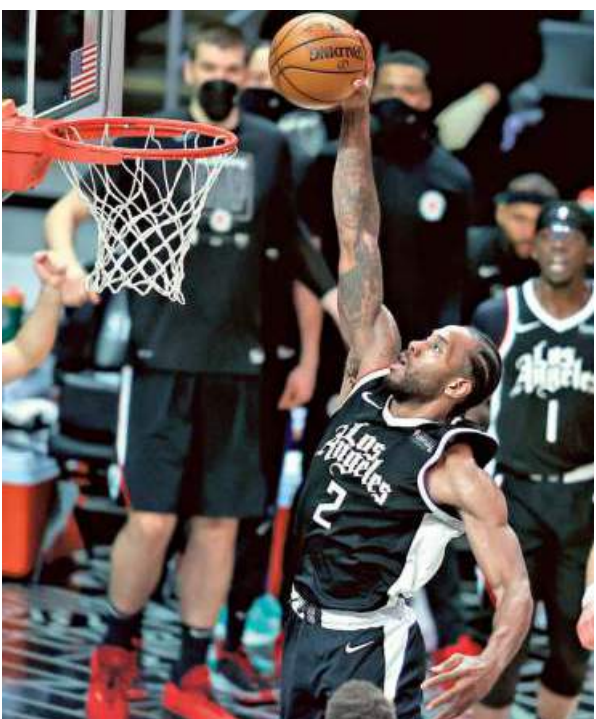
Kawhi Leonard and Paul George combined for 65 points as Los Angeles Clippers beat Utah Jazz 132-106 in game three of their NBA playoff series here on Saturday.

Leonard finished with 34 points and 12 assists and George had 31.

The Clippers put themselves in deep peril by losing the first two games of the Western Conference second round series. Reggie Jackson and Nicolas Batum added 17 points each for the Clippers.

Jazz was playing without guard Mike Conley, who sat out his third straight game with a sore hamstring. Donovan Mitchell scored 30 points but missed the final seven minutes after turning his right ankle.

Joe Ingles scored 19 points, while Jordan Clark-



Brooking no challenge: Kawhi Leonard of LA Clippers makes a breakaway dunk. AFP

son added 14. Utah trailed 106-95 after a three by Clarkson with 7:18 left.

Mitchell left the game and the Clippers smelt blood, scoring 10 straight points, with Leonard and Batum

draining consecutive threes to make it 116-95 with 5:22 remaining.

The result (semifinals): WC: Los Angeles Clippers 132 bt Utah Jazz 106 (Jazz leads series 2-1).

Chile's Alexis Sanchez out of group stage

COPA AMERICA

REUTERS  
SANTIAGO

Chile forward Alexis Sanchez will miss the group stage of the Copa America due to a leg injury, the national team said in a statement late on Saturday.

The 32-year-old was diagnosed with a muscle problem on his foot after train-

ing on Friday and will not travel to Brazil with the rest of the Chile squad for the tournament.

"The estimated recovery time exceeds the first phase of the Copa America, for which the athlete will remain in his recovery process in Chile, with the medical team of the national team," the team said.

Chile begins its campaign against Argentina at Rio de Janeiro's Nilton Santos stadium on Monday. It is also set to take on Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay in Group A.

Alexis Sanchez. AFP

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TODAY'S SCHEDULE

GROUP A

Argentina vs Chile 2.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Paraguay vs Bolivia 5.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Live on Sony Ten 2 and Sony 6 (SD & HD)

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